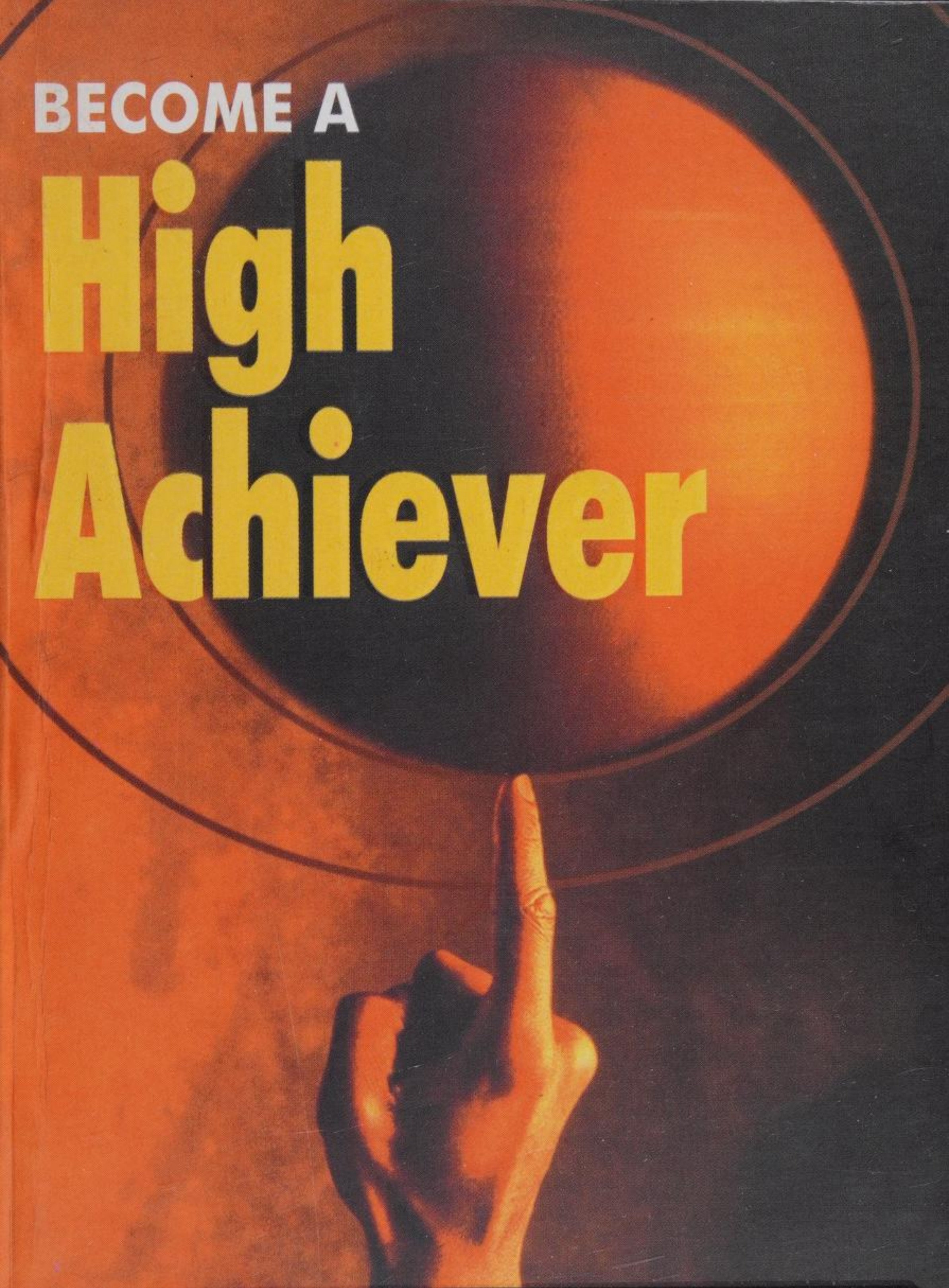
BECOME A

High Achiever



HIGH ACHIEVERS do better than others
by performing things DISTINCTLY

L M PRASAD

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- Do things innovatively
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- Do right things for right reasons
- Cope with stress effectively and manage it properly

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Become A High Achiever

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L M PRASAD

PARAGON BOOKS

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PREFACE

PEOPLE are the most precious resources of a country. However, not all people achieve what they are worthy of. In fact, all people have four unique endowments—self-awareness, conscience, independent will, and creative imagination. Our self-awareness enables us to examine our paradigms, to look at ourselves, to think about our thoughts, and to become aware of the social and psychic programmes. Our conscience puts us in touch with something within ourselves even deeper than our thoughts. Our independent will is our capacity to act, the power to transcend our paradigms, and to act on certain principles rather than on our emotions, moods, or circumstances. Our creative imagination empowers us to imagine and create beyond the present reality. In spite of all these endowments, many people fail to become high achievers. One of the basic reasons for this phenomenon is the lack of will and direction for their action. Therefore, they are not very clear as to how they should proceed in their life to do something meaningful. The present book has been designed to ignite the readers to create willingness in them and to provide direction for getting things done, ultimately providing the way for becoming high achiever.

The book has been divided into eight chapters with each chapter dealing with a specific issue related to become high achiever. In the beginning of each chapter, relevant thoughts related to the issue have been presented. This has been followed by the practical approach suggesting how these thoughts can be put into practice. At the end of each chapter, your action plan has been given which will help you to prepare your action plan once you have read a chapter and grasped it fully.

Approach for Using this Book

This book should not be used as a textbook, novel, or story book but it should be used as a work book. In a work book, you are supposed to do more than what you read. Therefore, while reading this book, it is better that you make notes of the points which are most relevant to you and make a plan how these points can be put into practice by you. Mere reading of a book does not turn your dream into reality; it requires continuous practice on your part. A book merely provides you guidelines; putting these guidelines into practice is your own work. Therefore, resolve to become a high achiever just now and work accordingly. A famous author has written as follows:

If you have hard work to do, do it now.
Today, the sky is clear and blue,
Tomorrow, clouds may come in view.
Yesterday is not for you, do it now.

I shall feel highly rewarded if the book is able to make you striving for becoming a high achiever. Kindly write your comments and suggestions on this book and e-mail to me at: lmprasadji@yahoo.com. For an author, readers' comments and suggestions are the most valuable.

L M Prasad

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1

HIGH ACHIEVEMENT AND HIGH ACHIEVER

Doing Better than Others

THERE are three types of people in this world—those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, those who wonder what happened. This is true in every walk of life—art, science, business, politics, game, sport, study, service, and so on. Those who make things happen are known as high achievers. Those who watch things happen are known as low achievers. Those who wonder what happened are known as non achievers. Before we go into the discussion of 'how to become a high achiever', let us have a look at what a high achievement is and what features a high achiever has.

HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

Achievement, in general, means accomplishment of goal (end result of any work). However, this goal may be a simple one or challenging one. If you accomplish a simple goal, it is not high achievement because, by nature, every human being is involved in goal-directed behaviour. When the goal is a challenging one, its accomplishment will qualify you to be termed as high achiever. This happens so because the society recognises the contributions of those who are involved in accomplishing challenging goals so that others can follow them. Thus, a high achievement is characterised by the following features:

1. It must be distinct.
2. It must have social relevance.
3. It must be gratifying to self.

If you take away any one of these features, the achievement does not remain high in spite of the presence of other features. Let us see how these three features are relevant for high achievement.

Distinct

An achievement can be called high if it is distinct, that is, it is different from others; it is better than others; it is unique and unusual. High achievement is like winning

a war consisting of a number of battles. It is not just like winning a battle or few battles. Consider the distinctiveness of a tortoise-type achievement.

Tortoise-type Achievement

Recall the story of the race between rabbit and tortoise, the first fast runner and the second slow runner. The story goes like this. In a forest, a rabbit used to challenge other animals for a race. One day, a tortoise accepted this challenge. The race began on the appointed day in the presence of other animals. The rabbit ran at a fast speed for some distance. Realising the slowness of the tortoise, it thought of taking some rest before running to the finishing point. During the rest, it was in deep sleep. Meanwhile the tortoise continued racing steadily though at a much slower speed. It reached the finishing point and won the race before the rabbit woke up.

Though many inferences, both positive and negative, can be drawn from this story, the question is: can we call the tortoise a high achiever (better runner) as it won the race against the rabbit? Certainly not. This has happened only in an exceptional case. Even today, when we compare the slowness of any object, living or non-living, we often give the example of tortoise. Similar is the case with high achievement. It must be distinct and not just like winning race by the tortoise. To be distinct, the achievement must be better than that of others. Achievement being better than others is based on the maxim:

The art of doing is that you do better than others.

Consider who wins 'man of the series award' in a team game like cricket, football, hockey, etc.; the player who shows better performance throughout and not just in one match. Consider who wins a trophy in a tournament involving individual players like lawn tennis, table tennis,

badminton, etc.; the player who shows better performance consistently.

Social Relevance

High achievement must have social relevance, that is, it must contribute to the betterment of the society directly or indirectly. Even spectacular achievement cannot be termed as high achievement if it does not contribute to social betterment. Consider the following event:

Achievement Worth Two Paise

A great Indian social and spiritual reformer used to travel frequently to preach the people to adopt practices for social and spiritual betterment. One day, on the bank of a river, he was waiting for a boatman to cross the river. Meanwhile, a saint came there and asked him about what he was doing there. The reformer told him about his waiting for boatman to cross the river. On hearing this, the saint told the reformer, "I have heard that you are a great spiritual leader but you do not know the simple art of crossing a river by walking on the water." The reformer said, "That is true. I do not know how to walk on the water. Do you know it?" The saint said proudly, "Yes" and crossed the river by walking on the water and came back. The reformer asked the saint, "How much time have you taken to learn this art?" The saint replied proudly, "Twenty years." Meanwhile, the boatman came and told the reformer that he would be charging two paise from him to get on other side of the river. On this, the reformer told the saint, "What you have learned in twenty years is just worth two paise. I believe that you have wasted twenty years of your precious time."

What lesson can we learn from this event? Any spectacular achievement is meaningless if it does not have social relevance. Socially-relevant achievements are

remembered for years or even for generations. Such achievements are even quoted in textbooks to stimulate the positive thinking among readers. Therefore, your approach should be to go for socially-relevant achievement.

Gratifying to Self

High achievement provides gratification to the achievers. Gratification is a kind of feeling of satisfaction that the achiever has from his achievement. Through gratification, the achiever develops in him a kind of self-confidence which is vital for further achievement. Often, high achievement is not one-shot action but a continuous activity. Such an activity has action, result, result evaluation, and further action. When an action produces result which matches with the desired result, the achiever takes further action in the same direction but with greater force. Through this process, the achiever builds up layer of achievements. This layer of achievements enables the achiever to realise his vision, his dreams of life, and ultimately his unique contributions to the society. If the achievement is not gratifying to the achiever, it implies that he does not attach high value to what he has achieved or is in the process of achieving. This brings break in the process of continuous action relevant for achievement. Such a situation arises when the particular action does not fit the value system of the achiever, his personality, and his way of working. Such a situation often becomes frustrating to the achiever and he may turn to be non achiever.

HIGH ACHIEVER

While high achievement is the result of consistent action or set of actions, action itself is a process of realising high achievement. This brings two questions before us: what are the features of high achievers? What actions do they undertake for realising high achievement?

Features of High Achiever

Often a question is asked: what types of people are most likely to become high achievers? Quite closely related to this question is another question: do high achievers have certain in-born qualities that enable them to become high achievers? There are certain controversies in this respect as some behavioural scientists think that high achievers have certain in-born qualities that help them in becoming high achievers; as against this, other behavioural scientists assert that there is nothing like in-born qualities but qualities required for being high achievers can be developed by people through continuous learning and practice. Behavioural scientists, who hold the latter view, produce numerous examples showing how persons once considered ordinary have developed qualities over the period of time to become high achievers. Let us sort out this controversy.

It is believed that human beings have four unique endowments—self awareness, conscience, independent will, and creative imagination. Our self-awareness enables us to examine our paradigms, to look at ourselves, to think about our thoughts, and to become aware of the social and psychic programmes. Our conscience puts us in touch with something within ourselves even deeper than our thoughts. Our independent will is our capacity to act, the power to transcend our paradigms, and to act on certain principles rather than based on emotions, moods, or circumstances. Our creative imagination empowers us to imagine and create beyond the present reality. These four endowments are evenly distributed among human beings. Those who make effective use of these endowments become high achievers and those who do not make effective use of these endowments remain low or non achievers. Thus, there is no difference between high and low achievers in terms of in-born qualities; such a difference appears later in terms of how people develop and use these qualities. If these qualities are in-born, these must be inherited. It, then, implies that a family which has

done well generations ago must do well even today. Similarly, a family that has done bad must do bad even today. The real facts are contrary to this. Many good families of the past have now become almost extinct; many industrial empires of the past have become extinct and their places have been taken over by families considered very poor not long ago. Therefore, the lesson is that you should not borrow this idea that high achievers have certain superior in-born qualities. Instead, you should focus your attention on the qualities that high achievers have developed over the period of time by virtue of which they have become high achievers. Based on success stories of great achievers, observations, and discussions with high achievers, I have arrived at a conclusion that the high achievers, in general, have the following qualities:

1. High achievers have high self-esteem.
2. High achievers have positive attitudes.
3. High achievers have ethical values.
4. High achievers are creative and innovative.
5. High achievers have emotional maturity.
6. High achievers have clear vision and goals.
7. High achievers manage their stress effectively.

These are the broad qualities and within each of these, there might be inter-related qualities. All the above qualities can be developed by any individual through continuous learning by combining observation, reading, and practice, provided one is willing.

Actions of High Achiever

The actions of high achievers differ from those of low achievers. High achievers create unique and valued positions for themselves either by performing different activities or by performing the same activities differently. They always think big and translate it into reality. This makes them high achievers. In doing so, high achievers

adopt a number of practices which are quite different from those of low achievers:

1. High achievers believe that they can shape and control events.
   Low achievers believe that events occur purely by chance.
2. High achievers seek advancement by relying on their abilities.
   Low achievers remain inactive and wait for the events to occur.
3. High achievers believe in winning war not just battles.
   Low achievers believe in winning battles not war.
4. High achievers set challenging goals.
   Low achievers set easy-going goals.
5. High achievers set trends and examples.
   Low achievers follow trends and examples.
6. High achievers capitalise even the slightest possible opportunities.
   Low achievers wait for the opportunities to materialise fully.
7. High achievers act on proactive basis.
   Low achievers act on reactive basis.
8. High achievers take actions after planning.
   Low achievers take actions before planning.
9. High achievers have long-term orientation.
   Low achievers have short-term orientation.
10. High achievers set agendas for themselves and others.
    Low achievers follow agendas set by others.
11. High achievers believe more in actions and less in words.

Low achievers believe more in words and less in actions.

12. High achievers tackle a situation before it becomes problem.
    Low achievers tackle a situation after it becomes problem.
13. High achievers convert their weaknesses into strengths by undertaking matching actions.
    Low achievers convert their strengths into weaknesses by undertaking mismatching actions.
14. High achievers set realistic time-frame to achieve anything.
    Low achievers set idealistic time-frame to achieve anything.
15. High achievers have commitment to whatever they do.
    Low achievers lack commitment to whatever they do.
16. High achievers keep promises.
    Low achievers make promises.
17. High achievers stick to values and compromise on petty things.
    Low achievers stick to petty things and compromise on values.
18. High achievers control their emotions.
    Low achievers are controlled by their emotions.
19. High achievers avoid procrastination.
    Low achievers pursue procrastination.
20. High achievers stand firm against stress.
    Low achievers break against stress.

Thus, you can observe that high achievers and low achievers differ considerably in terms of approach that they follow in doing things. While the approach of high achievers is positive, the approach of low achievers is negative. This difference in approach ultimately makes difference in what high achievers and low achievers achieve.

STEPS FOR BECOMING HIGH ACHIEVER

Sun Tzu, a 500-BC Chinese General has written that:

> ***If you know yourself and your enemy well, you can fight a hundred battles without worrying for results.***

What is true for fighting battles is true for high achievement too. High achievement is not the result of one-shot action but it is the result of well-directed continuous actions. But the question is: well-directed actions in what field? Therefore, the starting point is to define and choose the field in which you want to become high achiever. Though our life is full of choices, choices have their own consequences. We are free to make our choice but after we have chosen, the choice controls us. Therefore, making a right choice is the most critical aspect of the life. A right choice enables us to convert our dreams into reality while a wrong choice leads us to ruin. In fact, there are numerous examples which confirm that wrong choices have led the people to doom. Such choices have been made without considering one's own strengths and weaknesses that determine the degree of success. Success, here, means realisation of one's long-term goals. All persons have certain strengths and weaknesses but no person has strengths relevant to all fields. This happens because each field has certain unique features which require specific strengths. Since each individual differs in terms of biological and psychological factors, he cannot match the requirements of all fields. He can do well only

in that field with which his strengths match. Therefore, before making a choice, you must consider two categories of factors:

1. Your own strengths and weaknesses.
2. Critical success factors of your choice.

Assess Your Strengths and Weaknesses

Before making a choice, it is essential that you assess your strengths and weaknesses. In its absence, the choice is likely to be wrong. Though there are many such instances, I am just giving you one.

Fall of a Meritorious Student

A very meritorious student in Science (Chemistry) started research work for his Ph. D. after completing his M. Sc. Degree. His Ph. D. guide and others familiar to his research work had the opinion that he would make significant contribution in Chemistry. After a year, the student was lured by glamorous IAS job and engaged himself in preparing for competitive examination. His parents and family members also supported this idea considering his merit. He appeared in IAS examination twice but could not qualify. Being frustrated from this failure, he developed a feeling that he was worth for nothing. He left the research work too and joined a school as a teacher. What a miraculous fall of a meritorious student!

Why did this happen with a highly meritorious student? It is simply because he did not assess his strengths and weaknesses in the light of the requirements for IAS. What has happened with this student is, unfortunately, happening with many other meritorious students and persons in other walks of life.

Assessing one's own strengths and weaknesses is not a simple phenomenon but a difficult one. One Chinese philosopher has said long back, "The most crucial problem with us is that we don't know ourselves. With the result, either we overestimate or underestimate ourselves." In fact, people's qualities are like icebergs. What is seen above the surface is only a small part. A large part of the qualities which is known as potential is hidden below the surface. With the result, often, people see in themselves what they want to see. This may be far from reality. All the qualities of a person are likely to be assessed based on one quality or limited number of qualities. This type of assessment is wrong. Therefore, a systematic exercise is required to assess the total qualities.

In order to assess your strengths and weaknesses, that is, your competence, divide it into two parts—technical competence and behavioural competence. Technical competence pertains to knowledge and proficiency in activities involving methods, processes, and procedures. Since each activity differs from another, required technical competence also differs for each activity. Behavioural competence pertains to approach adopted by a person to apply his technical competence in getting things done. Behavioural competence, being an approach, applies to most activities similarly. After dividing your competence into two categories, assess your strengths and weaknesses on various dimensions of each competence. You may award points like 1, 2, 3, etc. or use qualitative measurement like excellent, average, poor, etc. Since measurement of competence is judgemental, it is essential that you become honest and fair to yourself. After all, you are not going to disclose the result of your own assessment to others. Therefore, no one except you will know your weaknesses. Remember, admitting of your weaknesses is crucial for your success because you get an opportunity to overcome these weaknesses by continuous practice. This self-assessment may be supplemented by feedback from others—your family members, friends, colleagues,

teachers, etc. who might have formed opinions about your competence. In the light of such a feedback, reassess yourself on those dimensions where your assessment differs from that of others. This is likely to give more realistic picture about yourself. The whole exercise may be chalked out in a tabular form in which the first column will depict various dimensions of your competence, both technical and behavioural, and the second column will depict the degree to which each dimension of competence you possess.

Assess Critical Success Factors

Just like assessing your strengths and weaknesses, you must also assess the critical success factors of the field in which you want to enter. Critical success factors of a field are those characteristics, conditions, or variables which have significant impact on the success in the field if these are maintained and sustained consistently. Generally, each field has certain critical success factors and these differ from field to field. Because of such a difference, a person cannot become successful in all the fields, even though he may have requisite competence for a particular field. Consider some examples:

A good academician can be highly successful in teaching and research and it is not necessary that he succeeds as a businessman. A successful player having high competence in a game, say lawn tennis, is unlikely to succeed in cricket. Even in the same game, a player cannot succeed in all positions, for example, a good wicketkeeper cannot be a good bowler too. There are numerous such examples.

The question is: why does this happen? The answer is: each field has unique requirements and a single person cannot meet the requirements of all the fields. A person can be successful only in that field for which he has competence to meet its requirements.

If critical success factors differ from field to field, the question is: how can these be identified? In order to find out the answer of this question, you can put another question: what do people need to do in order to become successful in a particular field? It is just like a person putting a question: what does he need to do to be successful in study, career, married life, etc.? However, the answer of the question 'what needs to be done to be successful in a particular field' is not as simple as it prima facie appears because there is no set formula for identifying critical success factors of a particular field. Like assessment of one's strengths and weaknesses, identification of critical success factors is also judgemental. Therefore, you are required to collect as much information as possible about the field in which you intend to enter. For this purpose, you can proceed in the following way:

1. Collect verbal information from those persons who are successful in the field. Based on their long experience and judgement, they will be better able to let you know something meaningful.
2. Read success and failure stories in the field concerned and derive your own conclusions. Reading of failure stories is as important as reading of success stories because that helps in providing safeguard against failure. This is based on the maxim:

   The scars of others should teach us caution.

After collecting information from various sources, analyse this in order to identify the critical success factors of the field concerned. If you are considering more than one field so that you have alternatives to choose from, repeat the same exercise for other fields too.

Construct Competence-CSF Matrix

So far, you have assessed your competence (strengths and weaknesses) and critical success factors of the field likely to be chosen by you independently. You can derive

meaningful conclusion only if you combine both assessments together. This can be done by constructing a competence-CSF (critical success factors) matrix for each field which is under consideration. In this matrix, show your competence on the left hand side and critical success factors on the right hand side. After doing this, relate each of your competences with the critical success factor with which it matches. Your competence-CSF matrix will appear like one given in Table 1.

Table 1: Competence-CSF matrix

Competence	*Degree* 3 2 1	*CSF*	*Degree* 3 2 1
Strengths		1.	
1.		2.	
2.			
3.		3.	
4.			
5.		4.	
Weaknesses		5.	
1.			
2.		6.	
3.		7.	
4.			
5.		8.	

From the competence-CSF matrix, you can find out the extent to which your competences match with critical success factors. The field which shows the highest matching is your optimum choice. In the case of mismatching, there may be two possibilities—critical success factors are lesser than your competence or critical success factors are more than your competence. In the first case, much of your competence will remain underutilised and you may feel frustration because of lack of sense of high achievement. In the second case, the chances of failure are high which is again a frustrating factor. In this hard

reality, do not get carried away by your ego that you can do everything or retreating back from a proposal is like losing and you never like to lose. You should bear in your mind that every field offers opportunity for high achievement no matter how small it might be to begin with. All high achievers have started with scratch doing work which you may consider unworthy at present whether it is Dhirubhai Ambani of Reliance, Karsanbhai Patel of Nirma, Mansukhbhai Kothari of Kothari Group, or Brimohanlall Munjal of Hero Group. These are only few names from business field. The list is endless not only in the business field but in other fields too.

Here, the assessment of one's competence and critical success factors of a field has been taken on static basis, that is, the situation existing at a particular time. With the passage of time, there is a change in both, your competence and critical success factors. You can develop your competence in future through learning. Similarly, critical success factors of a field change because of environmental changes. Therefore, while assessing these, this fact should also be taken into account.

In this book, the emphasis is on only development and use of behavioural competence and not on technical competence. This has been done for two reasons. *First*, behavioural competence is the same in every walk of life whether it is study, game, business, social service, or any other field while technical competence varies with the field. *Second*, behavioural competence energises a person to develop technical competence. For example, high motivation for learning quickens the process of developing technical competence; it can never be vice versa. For developing behavioural competence, the first basic step is to develop high self-esteem.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

1. You may be involved in undertaking various activities at your workplace, home, and social affairs. Find out the extent to which these activities are distinct, socially-relevant, and personally- gratifying.

   A. Workplace

   B. Home

   C. Social affairs

2. There are seven major qualities that high achievers possess. Find out the extent to which you possess these qualities.

   1. _____

   2. _____

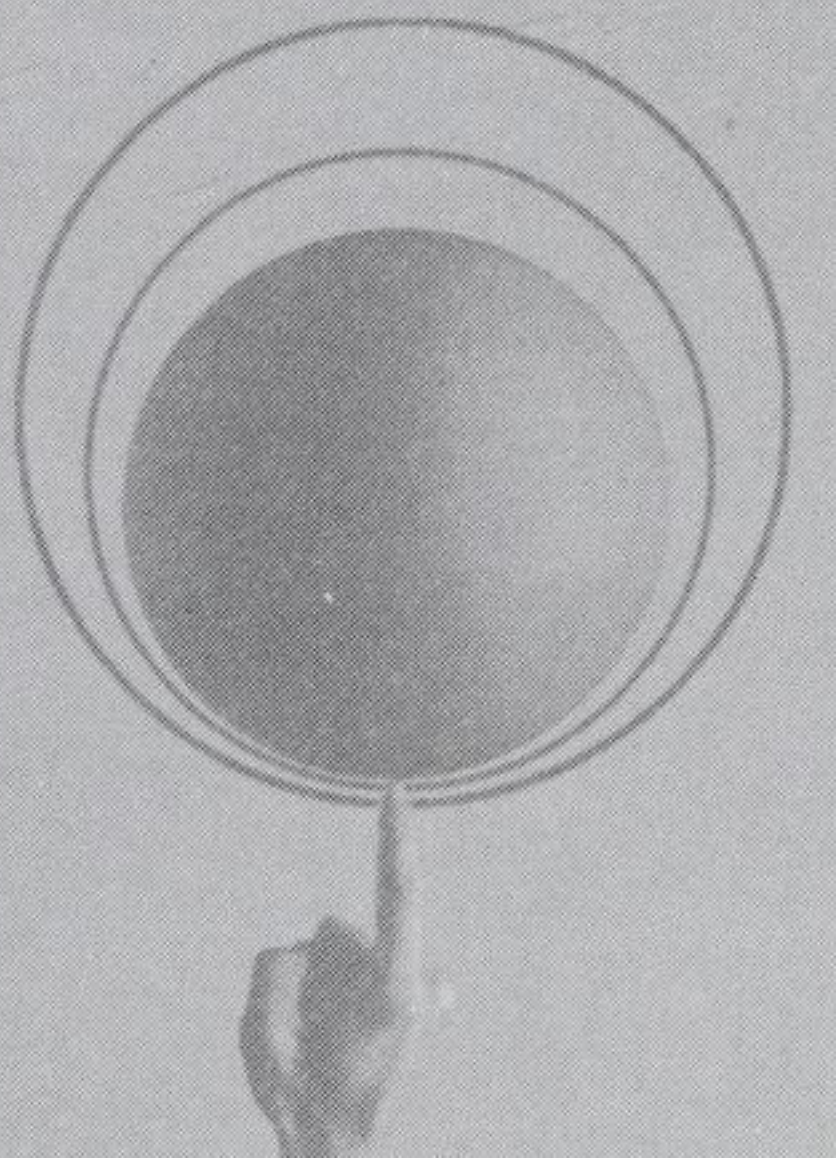
   3. _____

   4. _____

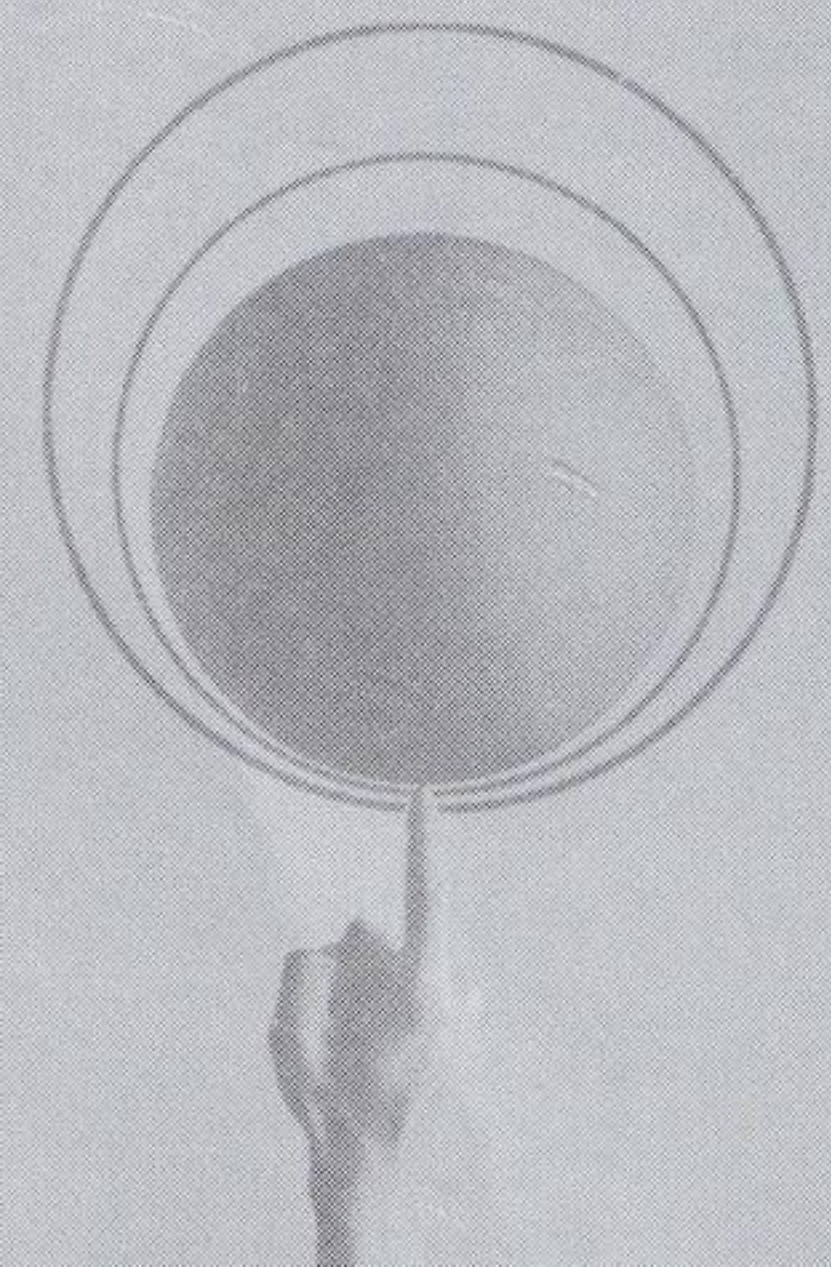
   5. _____

   6. _____

   7. _____



3. High achievers and low achievers differ in their approach on twenty dimensions. Find out the dimensions on which your approach matches with that of high achievers. Find out the reasons of those dimensions on which you differ from high achievers and their consequences.
4. Assess critical success factors of your work as well as your own strengths and weaknesses and find out the degree of match between the two. If there is some degree of mismatch, find out its reasons and take suitable action to overcome this mismatch.



2

DEVELOP HIGH SELF-ESTEEM

Believing in Making Things Happen

HIGH achievers have high self-esteem. Self-esteem is the extent to which a person believes that he is a worthy and deserving individual. It denotes the extent to which he consistently regards himself as being capable to make the things happen. It is a kind of confidence that a person has in himself. If a person has high self-esteem, he feels that he can make the things happen while the person having low self-esteem develops a feeling that he cannot make the things happen. In fact, this is the major difference between high and low achievers. Following table indicates the feelings of people having high and low self-esteem:

Feelings of people having high and low self-esteem

High self-esteem	*Low self-esteem*
Competent	Incompetent
Confident	Afraid
In control	Controlled
Worthy	Unworthy
Useful	Unuseful
Productive	Unproductive
Winner	Loser
Respected	Rejected
Important	Unimportant
Proactive	Reactive
Desirable	Undesirable
Purposeful	Meaningless

The verbal cues that high achievers emit are like 'I will do it' and not 'I will try to do it', 'thing is difficult but it can be done' and not 'thing is too difficult to be done', and so on. First types of cues denote confidence while second types of cues denote lack of confidence. This confidence helps you to get things done because you put your maximum efforts in the process. In its absence, you do work half heartedly without any positive consequence. Read the following poetry of a well-known poet:

If you think you are beaten, you are;
If you think you dare not, you don't.

If you like to win but you think you can't,
It is almost certain you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you are lost
For out in the world we find

Success begins with a fellow's will;
It is all in the state of mind.

If you think you are outclassed, you are;
You've got to think high to rise.

You've got to be sure of yourself before
You can ever win a prize.

Life's battles don't always go to
The stronger or faster man;

Sooner or later the man who wins
Is the man who thinks he can.

There are several instances which confirm that if one has high self-esteem, he will win. Consider the following instance:

I Will Prevail Over Them

Swami Dayananda Saraswati went to Kashi (Varanasi), the most renowned place of Vedic learning, to participate in a debate on Vedas. He was pitched against many learned pundits of Kashi. On hearing this news, one of the followers of Swamiji came and asked him, "The pundits of Kashi are well-known for their knowledge and erudite, well-versed with the scriptures, how are you going to win over them in the ensuing debate? Even if you are able to defeat any one of them in argument, how are you going to prevail over all of them who are many?" Swamiji replied, "Among all the pundits, there is one Shastri from South who has some understanding of Vedas; he can talk to me for some time. The rest are not so able and learned; they have some knowledge of new Vedant only and know some grammar. Therefore, I am confident that I will be able to prevail over all the twenty-seven pundits who have been invited to participate in the debate." Swamiji prevailed over all the pundits and won the debate. One of the main reasons for winning was his self-confidence.

For a high achiever, there is nothing impossible in his field. Napolean Boneparte used to say, "Impossible word does not exist in my dictionary." It shows great confidence in himself. Therefore, if you want to become high achiever, develop high self-esteem. However, developing high self-esteem is not an easy-going proposition but a difficult one. It requires continuous well-directed efforts. In order to ensure that your efforts are well-directed, you are required to identify the ingredients of high self-esteem and the approaches that you should adopt for developing high self-esteem.

INGREDIENTS OF HIGH SELF-ESTEEM

Everyone of us has lot of potential that lies below the surface. There is a need for unlocking this potential to use it as creative energy. When you use your full potential, your self-esteem will automatically be high. In order to do this, you must do the following:

1. Develop internal locus of control.
2. Develop passion for high achievement.
3. Develop commitment.
4. Put focus.
5. Develop openness.
6. Develop risk propensity.
7. Face failure boldly.

Develop Internal Locus of Control

Locus of control means the belief of the people whether they are in control of events or events control them. Those who have internal locus of control believe that they control and shape the course of events in their life. Those who have external locus of control believe that events occur purely by chance or because of factors beyond their own control. People with external locus of control rely more on their fate and less on their efforts. They have a conviction that whatever the God have written in their fate will

happen, no matter whether they put efforts or not. Unfortunately, many stories exist which put more emphasis on fate than efforts. Such stories reinforce the conviction of people having external locus of control. If the word fate exists, there may be impact of fate on one's achievement as interpreted by people having external locus of control. But read the following recent research report:

The Head of Research Unit in Psychology Department of Hertfortshire University, Dr. Richard Wizeman, who along with his colleagues conducted detailed research study of 400 persons who considered themselves either highly lucky or unlucky, has concluded that no one has born either lucky or unlucky. The research team has concluded that those who consider themselves lucky, adopt the four basic principles in getting things done, either consciously or subconsciously:

1. They extend their opportunities for being successful with the help of their friends and associates and capitalise these opportunities in their favour.
2. They use their intelligence and intuition in making effective decisions, and by their competence, they free themselves from the effects of others.
3. They live with the expectation of doing even better in future.
4. They are psychologically competent to face any unfortunate situation and convert it into an opportunity.

The research team has further concluded that since highly successful people follow some of these four principles subconsciously, they tend to give some credit of success to their luck factor. However, if you analyse the working of subconscious mind, you will find that it is actually controlled by conscious mind. Conscious mind is that part of mind which is concerned with immediate awareness. What we think, what we do, we do it with our conscious mind. Subconscious mind is that part of mind which stores data of what we think or do. It stores data of

all types—thinking, doing, imagining, desiring, wanting, etc. But subconscious mind stores data only about what conscious mind has done. Since some of the data might be recalled easily by conscious mind and some of the data suppressed much below cannot be recalled easily, we perceive that our subconscious mind is independent. Data which cannot be recalled also affect our behaviour though we are not conscious about this. Since we are not conscious about this, we presume that this particular behaviour has been caused by luck factor.

What conclusion can be drawn from this research report? The conclusion is that there is nothing like luck factor. Whatever it is, it is our effort governed by our subconscious mind. Therefore, believing in external locus of control is like avoiding the reality of life. In order to become high achiever, you must develop the feeling of having internal locus of control in order to put your maximum possible efforts for achieving what you want to achieve. Make the things happen in your favour rather than waiting for the things to happen in your favour. If you wait, you will continue waiting and nothing will happen. Consider what Abraham Lincoln has said in the context of such a type of waiting:

> *Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle.*

Develop Passion for High Achievement

When you have developed internal locus of control, you are in a better position for developing passion for high achievement. Passion is the burning desire to get something. When you have burning desire to get something, you put your maximum energy for this. In fact, there is no readymade formula for success. It is your burning desire that inspires you to put utmost efforts. Consider the following event:

Secret of Success

A young man asked Socrates, the famous Greek philosopher, the secret of being successful. Socrates told the young man to meet him near the river next morning. When both met near the river next morning, Socrates asked the young man to walk with him in the river. Both entered the river. When water got up to their neck, Socrates ducked the young man into the water. The young man struggled to get out of water but Socrates was strong enough and kept the young man in the water until he started turning faint. Socrates released the pressure and the young man's head came out of water. The first thing that the young man did was to take a deep breath of air. Socrates asked the young man, "What did you want the most when you were in water?" The young man replied, 'Air.' Socrates asked another question, "What did you do to get the air?" The young man replied, "I put my utmost energy to get out of water." Socrates told the young man, "When you want success as badly as you wanted air and put your utmost energy, you will get it. There is no other secret of success."

What is the lesson of this event? If we want to achieve something, we must have burning desire for it because only then we can put our utmost efforts. Do we not run fastest when a barking dog runs behing us? If you still want to have a formula for high achievement, you can put it in the following manner:

High achievement = Result of (passion for high achievement + well-directed efforts)

In fact, high achievers have passion for high achievement and direct their efforts accordingly. This fact has been acknowledged by management experts too. They make a difference between motivation and passion (they have used the term volition instead of passion). Motivation is a bahavioural tendency to do something while volition is the resolve to achieve outcomes. With motivation, one

tends to be hindered by situational factors but with volition, one tends to overcome the situational factors. High achievers have volition not just motivation. Consider the following example:

I Have Burning Desire to Be Number One

In 1970, when Reliance Industries Limited was in its infancy, its Chairman, Dhirubhai Ambani, told one of his colleagues, "Do you know who these Tatas and Birlas are? We have to get past them one day. I want to become number one industrialist of the country." Reliance was very small company at that time and no one used to take it seriously. But because of the burning desire of its Chairman of being number one industrialist, Reliance has become number one company in the private sector of India. Not only that, its march for having better achievements still continues even with greater force.

Passion for high achievement not only excites you to use your existing capabilities fully but it also excites you to develop further capabilities. It may be mentioned that your capabilities are not a constant factor but these can be developed further as the time passes. This development process works in the following manner:

Desire ——→ Efforts ——→ Achievement

Higher desire ——→ Higher efforts → Higher achievement

At each subsequent level, higher amount of effort is required backed by higher capabilities. Because of your higher desire, you are forced to struggle and some of your dormant qualities which otherwise would have remained unawakened and unused, come to your rescue. Such qualities add to your capabilities.

Develop Commitment

In order to become high achiever, it is essential that you develop commitment towards what you want to achieve.

Commitment is a kind of dedication that people show while working. This commitment is required in every field of life and determines the degree of success. For example, Vince Lombardi has written long back as follows:

> ***The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to his commitment to excellence, regardless of his chosen field of endeavour.***

In fact, when you are sure and sincere about what you want to achieve, your commitment is already there which implies that you put your maximum possible efforts to achieve it. If you do not have such a commitment, it shows that you are not really sincere to what you want to achieve. It is merely a wishful thinking which never pays any dividend. It is merely your preference for achieving something; it is not your conviction for achieving that thing. There is a basic difference between preference and conviction. Preference is a kind of choice that may change under pressure while conviction becomes stronger under pressure; more stronger the pressure is built by the external forces, more stronger the conviction becomes. Remember the conviction shown by freedom fighters during the process of freeing India from British Rule. More cruelities the Britishers showed against these freedom fighters, more strength they showed to their mission. You are required to show this kind of conviction to your mission of achieving something. In its absence, your mission is unlikely to be achieved because you will put only half-hearted efforts. High achievement requires high work-ethic orientation. Highly work ethic-oriented people get greatly involved in their work and live up to being described as living, eating, and breathing the work. For such people, work becomes the only consideration of satisfaction.

Put Focus

You must put focus on what you want to become, what you want to achieve. People who focus on

relatively limited number of goals at one time are likely to be organised, systematic, careful, thorough, responsible, and self-disciplined. Those who pursue a number of goals at the same time are likely to be disorganised, careless, and even irresponsible. Those who put focus on what they want to achieve are more successful than those who do not put this focus. Consider the following event from *Mahabharat:*

I See Only Bird's Eye

Acharya Drona was the teacher of Kauravas and Pandavas since their childhood. He was providing education and training to princes with more emphasis on use of different types of arms. After certain period of training, he wanted to test the skill of his disciples. For this purpose, a bird was perched on a tree and princes had to shoot the eye of the bird with an arrow. Most of the princes thought it to be an easy task. Acharya called Yudhisthir, the eldest Pandava and asked him to take his aim at the bird's eye. After Yudhisthir took the aim, Acharya asked him, "What do you see?" Yudhisthir replied, "I see the target bird, whole tree, and other birds sitting on it." Acharya stopped him from shooting the bird's eye. He called other princes turn by turn based on their seniority according to age. On putting the same question, all the princes replied in the same way as Yudhisthir did. Now the turn of Arjun came. When he took the aim on the target—the bird's eye, Acharya asked him, "What do you see?" Arjun replied, "Only the target bird." Acharya asked him to take his aim afresh which he did. On this, Acharya asked the same question, "What do you see?" Arjun replied, "I see only the bird's eye and nothing else is visible to me." Acharya was quite pleased with this answer and declared him as successful in the test. Later, Arjun became the best archer in the then world.

What lesson can we draw from this event? The person who has focus on his target will be successful. This is true in every walk of life. If you do many things at a time, you may be jack of all but master of none, and you cannot achieve anything meaningful. Therefore, put focus on what you want to achieve.

Develop Openness

Your mind is like a parachute. It works well when it is open. Therefore, develop high openness. People with openness are willing to listen to new ideas and change their own ideas, beliefs, and attitudes in response to new information. They also tend to be curious, imaginative, and creative. On the other hand, people with low level of openness tend to be less receptive of new ideas and less willing to change their minds. They also tend to be less curious and creative. Generally, people with high openness tend to be more successful than those with low openness.

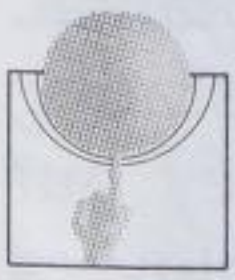
The environment in which you have to work is dynamic and keeps changing. In the changed environment, old strategies may not be effective. Even old methods of working may not be effective. Therefore, if you keep on working with old strategies and methods, your effectiveness is likely to be reduced. When you have developed high openness, you will be willing to change your strategies and methods of working according to the new situation. In fact, one's success depends to a great extent on the degree of his environmental adaptation. This environmental adaptation comes through aligning your actions with environmental demands. If you look at the success of Japanese companies, you will find one major difference between these companies and other companies in the form of degree of environmental adaptation. Japanese companies put high emphasis on incorporating new ideas from whatever sources these come. They put high emphasis on getting new ideas from their employees through suggestion systems because they feel that

employees have extensive and intensive knowledge of the work and they are in better position to give new ideas. Many companies have saved billions of dollars by incorporating new ideas of their employees.

Therefore, it is essential to keep your mind open to new ideas from whatever sources these come. You may get new ideas from your friends, family members, experts in your field, various publications, etc. When you get new ideas, do not follow these blindly. Evaluate these ideas and adopt only those which are helpful in achieving your goals. If need be, you must make suitable changes in the ideas before adopting these because the ideas that have been successful in other cases might not be applicable in your case in their totality. This happens because two situations are seldom perfectly alike.

Develop Risk Propensity

For being a high achiever, you must develop risk propensity. Risk propensity is the degree to which a person is willing to take chances and make risky decisions. When you try to do better than others, you have to adopt practices that are different from others because if you adopt the same practices, there will not be any difference between you and others. Adopting different practices involves risk because of the uncertainity that exists in the environment you work. The environment in which you have to work is not as precisely clear as you wish. It is ambiguous in which only a part of the information is known. You have to work on the basis of this partial information. So what will you do in such a situation? Will you like to remain inactive in order to avoid risk or will you take risk in order to achieve your goals? Consider the following example:



I Have Played Safe

A farmer did not sow any crop in a rainy season. One day, his relative who was also a farmer came to visit him.

After customary talks, the relative asked the farmer, "How many acres of paddy have you planted this year?" The farmer replied, "None as I feel that there will not be enough rain this year." The relative asked further, "Then you must have sown maize as it requires very little water." The farmer said, "No, because I feel that there will be plenty of pests because of inadequate rain and that will destroy maize." The relative asked again, "Which crop have you sown this year?" The farmer replied, "None, I have played safe." The result: the farmer could not reap any crop in that season.

Will you like to play such a safe game? Remember: ships are safest at the port but they are not meant for that. They have to sail over sea water in spite of the adverse situations created by the sea. Similarly, the books are safest in the library stacks but they are not meant for that. They have to be lent to readers irrespective of the risk that the books might be damaged by the readers. In the same way, you have to take actions to achieve your goals in spite of the risk involved in these actions. In the absence of your willingness to take risk, you may lose an opportunity. Once an opportunity is lost, it seldom comes in the same form; it may be better or worse. The high achiever is one who is willing to capitalise an opportunity in its first appearance. He does not wait others to capitalise an initial opportunity and become their follower. He believes in being a leader.

Generally, there is a feeling that risk and gain go together. Higher is the degree of risk, higher is the degree of likely gain. However, this risk should be well-calculated one. Risk taking does not mean gambling foolishly. Sometimes, people show irresponsible and impulsive behaviour in taking an action. When the result is negative, which is the most likelihood of such a behaviour, they blame their bad luck. Remember: risk taking is done with open eyes and gambling is done with closed eyes; risk taking requires calculation, gambling is free from such a calculation.

Face Failure Boldly

If you want to be successful, you must be ready to face failure boldly. Often, success and failure are two sides of a coin with one fundamental difference. The difference lies in the probability of their occurrence. If you toss a coin fairly a large number of times, you will get equal number of heads and tails. But if you take several actions over the period of time, chances of success and failure are not equal. If your actions are well-directed, the chances of success are much higher than failure. If your actions are not well-directed, the chances of failure are higher than success. It implies that even if your actions are well-directed, you may face failure because the outcome of actions depends on the environment in which you take actions. If your actions fall short of environmental demands, you may face failure. What will you do in such a situation? Will you leave your field half-way? Consider the following examples:

1. Abraham Lincoln failed in business at the age of 21. He was defeated in a legislative assembly election at the age of 22; started business again and failed at the age of 24; had a nervous breakdown at the age of 27; was defeated in a congressional race at the age of 34; was defeated in a senatorial race at the age of 45; failed in an effort to become vice-president at the age of 47; and lost a senatorial race once again at the age of 49. He was elected as president of the USA at the age of 52 and became one of the most influential presidents in the history of the USA as he took many bold steps to reform his country.
2. Bill Gates was dropped from a school as he was considered very weak in study. Later, he developed skills for developing computer software. Subsequently, he opened his company—Microsoft—which has now become number one computer

software company of the world and Bill Gates has become the richest person of the world.

3. Amitabh Bachchan was interested in film-acting. He approached many film producers and directors at Mumbai (then Bombay). Nearly all of them refused to give him any role. In fact, one of them commented, "You are too thin and too tall to become a film actor." Bachchan continued trying and got a small role in a film. The film was not successful but Bachchan continued trying. Later on, he became so successful film actor that he was given the 'The Best Actor of the Millennium Award'.

What do we learn from these examples? Can we call the above persons as having failed? Certainly not. They have failed only initially which is not uncommon if one starts from scratch. Ultimately, they have become highly successful. But consider what has made them successful. It is their persistence to become successful. Therefore, when you face a situation of failure, do not lose your patience but face it boldly. Admit your mistakes if you have committed in the process of being successful and rectify these in your next effort. If you leave the field half-way, you end up with nothing. Continue your journey with persistence because persistence has no substitute as Clavin Coolidge has said:

> *Nothing will take the place of persistence; talent will not: nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not: unrewarded genius is a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.*

With persistence, nothing is impossible. Even a rope makes line on a stone because of its persistence while the stone is much harder than the rope. So, face failure boldly and continue your efforts persistently.

When you work on the various points indicated above, you will start being successful. It may be small one at the

beginning but that will help you to develop high self-esteem which, in turn, will bring much bigger successes and will, ultimately, make you high achiever.

APPROACHES FOR DEVELOPING HIGH SELF-ESTEEM

Developing high self-esteem requires continuous learning and putting that learning into practice. For effective learning, there must be a cue or set of cues that stimulates one's behaviour. Cue is any object or event in the environment with which the person interacts and draws conclusions. These conclusions then become part of the person's behaviour including the development of high self-esteem. Since a person may draw conclusions from different types of cues, he uses a variety of cues. The same is true for you also. You may adopt the following approaches to develop high self-esteem:

1. Use model.
2. Learn from others' experience.
3. Use auto-suggestion.
4. Learn from your own experience.

All these approaches are not mutually exclusive but can be used in combination. While using these approaches, ensure that you pick up only those cues which reinforce your belief about your own confidence. Cues that affect it adversely should be filtered out because you may receive both positive and negative cues from the environment. Let us see how these approaches can be used effectively to develop high self-esteem.

Use Model

You must have observed that a child imitates the behaviour of an elder person in the family from his early childhood. Even when he grows up, he continues this process. Through this process, he learns. This process is known as modelling in learning. In fact, every one of us tries to imitate the

behaviour of others to whom we perceive as being high achievers. It is quite possible that we may change our behaviour later in the light of new information or cues to do still better. To know how the use of model will help you develop high self-esteem, go through the following example:

It Instils Confidence in Me

One of my MBA students joined a company as sales executive after obtaining his MBA degree. The company had its operations in India and in some foreign countries. During the period of his service, he served in India as well as abroad. After some period of time, he decided to quit his job in order to start his own business. He quit the job and came back to India. Since he majored in marketing during his MBA study and had practical experience in the same field, he started his business by becoming distributor of some companies in the field of fast-moving consumer goods. Later on, he increased the number of such companies operating in FMCG sector. Subsequently, he increased the volume of his business and became clearing and forwarding agent of some of the companies.

One day, I visited his office on his invitation. His office was not big but it was quite systematic. When I entered his office, I saw a photo-frame containing two photographas—one was that of Dhirubhai Ambani of Reliance and another was of N R Narayanmurthy of Infosys Technologies. The photo-frame was hanged on the wall facing him. At the bottom end of the photo-frame, the following line was written:

If They Can Do It, I Can Do It Too.

This picture-frame seemed quite unusual to me. It was unusual because we generally find the photographs of

God/Goddess, national leader, or elder member of the family concerned. I asked my student, "Why have you put these photographs in your office?" His reply was, "I believe, they are great achievers in their field and I draw inspiration from them." On his answer, I mentioned the names of some industrialists from well-known industrial houses and asked him, "Why have you not put the photographs of these industrialists? After all, they are also high achievers." He replied politely, "Sir, I do not wish to belittle their contributions. But they all have started their success journey on sufficient base. When such a base is available, any one can do that. These two personalities have started from scratch and have taken their companies to such a great height that even industrialists of well-known industrial houses envy them." My further question was, "Why have you written those words at the bottom of the photo-frame?" He replied, "Sir, I believe that what they have achieved is spectacular but that is not impossible. If that is not impossible, I believe that I can do it too. This belief instils confidence in me. This belief stimulates me to do better and better everyday."

Just to mention the achievements of Dhirubhai Ambani and Narayanmurthy briefly is: Dhirubhai Ambani started his career as a salesman at a petrol pump in Yemen. Subsequently, he moved to India and started his business with a meagre capital of Rs. 15,000 in 1959. With his passion for high achievement, this business has now been transformed into the present Reliance Industries Limited—India's largest company in the private sector. Narayanmurthy started his career as a software developer in small scale at Pune in 1970s. Subsequently, he moved to Bangalore. Pursuing excellence in every activity related to software development, he established Infosys Technologies Limited—the most admired software company of India having global presence.

What inference can be drawn from the above example? The inference is: if you use a model effectively, it can help

you to develop your self-esteem immensely. The word 'effectively' is very important because if you do not use a model effectively, it is of no consequence. You may find photograph of Mahatma Gandhi—the father of the nation—in most of the government offices. But the question is: do employees really feel inspired by such a photograph to perform their duties? Painfully, in most of the cases, your answer may be 'no'. In fact, many of the employees do not care to see the photograph itself what to talk of deriving inspiration from it.

Learn from Others' Experience

You can learn from others' experience to enhance your self-esteem. Others' experience is available to you in several forms: biography, personal contact, events, and others' practices. Biography is one of the most valuable means to get the insights of others' experience. When a biography of a great achiever is written, it is not just to pay homage to him but it is meant for public consumption. The idea is that people will become like him after reading his biography. A biography not only narrates what the person has achieved but also the way in which he has achieved. By following the similar way, one may be able to achieve something relevant in one's field. When you read any biography relevant to your field, it should not be merely in the form of reading a novel or story for entertainment, rather, you must make notes of important points which are relevant to you. Evaluate these points and draw your own conclusions as to how you can enhance your self-esteem by applying these points. Once you develop this habit, you can draw conclusions from any type of literature that you read.

Another method of learning from others' experience is through personal contact with high achievers. When you read about a high achiever without meeting him, you may form an opinion that the person concerned has some exceptional qualities because of which he has achieved something meaningful. When you meet him personally,

you may find that he does not have exceptional qualities but only exceptional way of working. What they say, they practise it too. Sometimes back, one industrialist addressed to our MBA students. He emphasised three elements for success: clarity and sincerity of goals, foresight, and hard work. After the lecture was over and we came out of lecture hall, one of my students asked, "What is new in his lecture? I know these three elements." My reply was, "Everyone of us knows these three elements. But how many of us do put these elements in practice?" A high achiever may not give you anything theoretically, but he gives a lot practically.

Learning for development of high self-esteem can take place from the events occurring in the environment. Everyone of us may be aware of the story of 'King and Spider'. To recapitulate:

King and Spider

A king was defeated by his enemy and lost his state. In order to save himself from his enemy, he ran away to a forest and took shelter in a hut. While lying on the ground, he was gazing towards the roof. Meanwhile, a spider fell on the ground from its cobweb. It made several attempts to reach back to cobweb which was hanging with the roof. In each attempt, the spider used to fall but it continued making attempts. In each subsequent attempt, it used to reach nearer to its cobweb. After several attempts, it finally reached its cobweb. The king was gazing spider's attempts and drew the conclusion: "If such a tiny spider can reach its destination by repeated efforts, why can't I?" This event instilled confidence in the king. He reorganised his army and fought battle against his enemy. This time, he was victorious as he fought with much stronger confidence.

So, the lesson of this event is: you can enhance your self-esteem by observing events and drawing meaningful conclusions.

You can enhance your self-esteem by observing the practices followed by others and developing the way to improve these practices. When Dhirubhai Ambani was serving at a petrol pump, he observed that the businessmen were doing the things inefficiently but still making lot of money. He thought that "Why cannot I make money by doing things efficiently?" This thought gave him immense confidence for doing his own business. Consider the situations under which opposite parties develop confidence in themselves by observing the practices adopted by opponents. Some of the situations are presented below:

1. A team observes the practices followed by players of an opposite team. When the opposite team players have some weaknesses, the first team develops confidence that it can prevail over its opposition.
2. In business, the weaknesses of competitors become the cue for developing confidence in a businessman.
3. In profession, the weaknesses of a professional become a cue for developing confidence in another professional to do better.

There are several such situations in every field. While observing the weaknesses of others, ensure that you do not develop such weaknesses in you but overcome these weaknesses by your innovative working.

Use Auto-Suggestion

An auto-suggestion is a set of self-prepared statements showing what type of person you want to be. This can be used as a means for developing high self-esteem. An auto-suggestion indicates what you should do or not do to become a person which you want to become. If you wish to apply this strategy to develop high self-esteem, you must prepare such statements which reinforce your confidence in your ability to do something worthwhile.

Some of the statements that you may include in your auto-suggestion are as follows:

1. I am born to win.
2. I must play to win and not to lose.
3. Getting things done may be difficult but not impossible.
4. I am confident that I can make things happen.
5. If others can do it, I can do it too.
6. I can do better than even the present best.

These statements are merely few examples. You can have your own statements that suit you. Write relevant statements on a piece of paper. Keep this paper at a place and in such a manner that it attracts your attention everyday. Read these statements every morning and evening. When you read these statements, they will give you instant feeling of being confident but these work in another manner too. You read these statements with your conscious mind. Your conscious mind sends signal about these statements to your subconscious mind which keeps these in memory for a very long time. When you repeat these statements several times, the memory gets reinforced and, consequently, your mind becomes conditioned to such statements. This conditioning enhances your self-confidence which is reflected in your way of working.

Learn from Your Own Experience

While auto-suggestion gives you psychic energy to feel confident, your own experience confirms this psychic energy. In fact, one of the best ways of developing high self-esteem is to learn from your own experience. Your own experience is valuable if it is meaningful and used wisely. If you perform certain action, you get a result. If this result matches your expectation, you develop confidence in yourself that you are worthy of doing something meaningful. When you get positive results time after time, your confidence goes up further. This process occurs as follows:

Action ——→ Result ——→ Self-esteem

Better action ——→ Better result ——→ Higher self-esteem

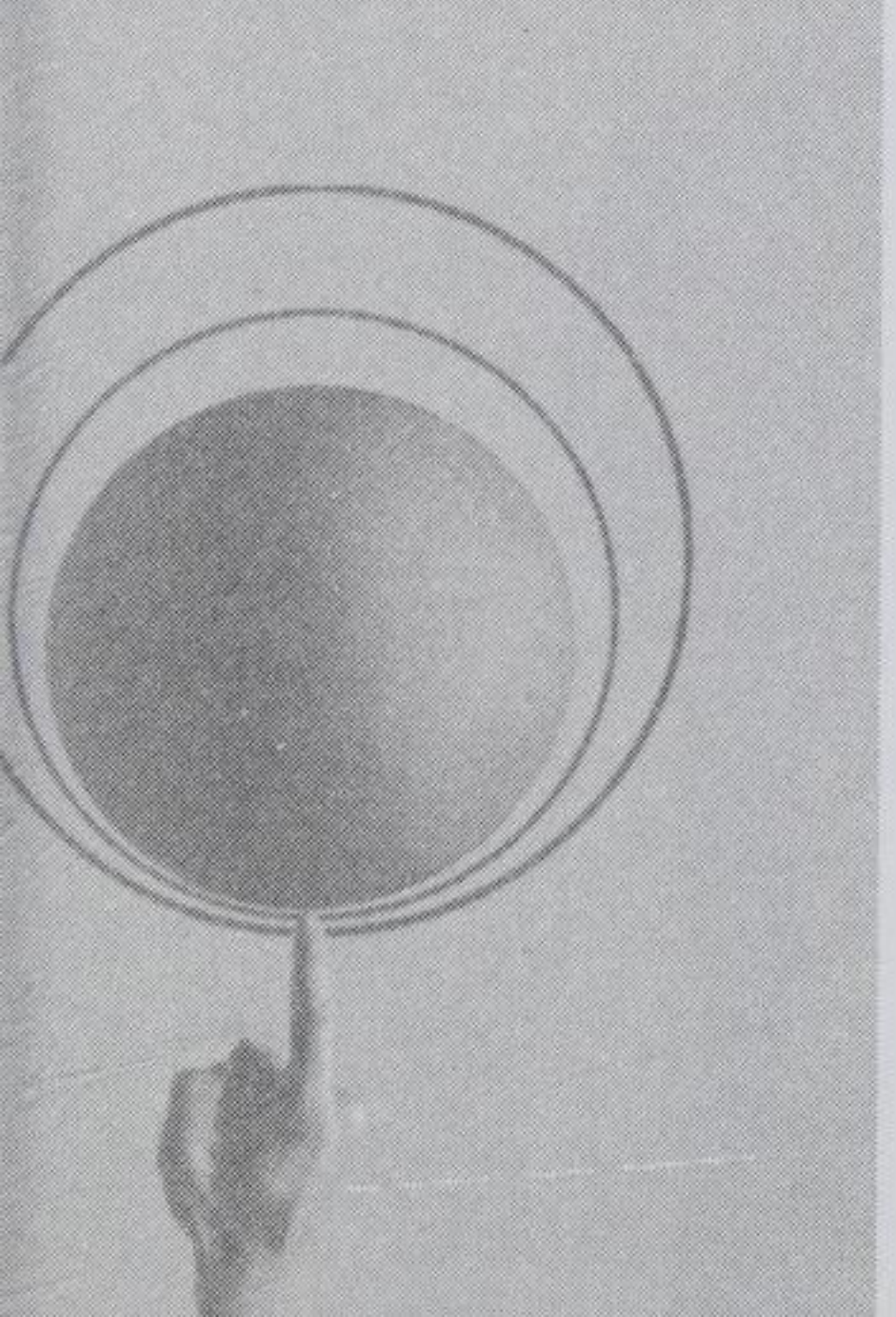
In order to continue this process, it is necessary that each time, your action is better than the previous one. This way, you develop high self-esteem to do something wonderful, as St. Francis of Assisi has put:

> ***Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.***

If your next action is similar to your previous action, your experience is not meaningful and the process of developing high self-esteem stops. If you see the experience of workers working in a coal-mine, you will find that most of these workers retire as workers even with the so-called very lengthy experience. This happens because they do the same work in the same way at the time of retirement with which they have started their beginning. Their experience turns to be one year multiplied by thirty-five times, and not thirty-five years. Such an experience is not meaningful. The basic idea behind the experience is that an experience-holder will weed out the practices which are undesirable in doing his work and replace these with new practices which are desirable. Because of the replacement of undesirable practices by desirable ones, the next action of the experience-holder becomes better than the previous action.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

1. Assess the level of your self-esteem. In order to enhance your self-esteem, adopt some practices which are relevant to you. Adopt these practices sincerely and measure their impact after some time.
2. Interact with those elements—persons, objects, and situations—which increase your self-esteem. At the same time, get away from those elements which affect your self-esteem adversely.
3. Read carefully what high achievers say and do. These high achievers may be from any field. Make brief note of what you read. Find out the extent to which such a saying or doing is practicable. If it is practicable, adopt it in practice with a view that you can do still better as the chances of doing better always exist.



3

DEVELOP POSITIVE ATTITUDES

Looking for Opportunities not Threats

THERE are three factors which determine the degree to which a person may become successful. These three factors are knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Knowledge refers to the possession of information, facts, and techniques of a particular field. Skills refer to the proficiency required to use the knowledge to do a work. Attitudes refer to the persistent tendency to feel and behave in a favourable or unfavourable way towards some persons, objects, and ideas. It is true that a person requires knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become successful but it is also true that these three factors have importance in ascending order, that is, attitudes come first followed by skills and knowledge in that order. That is why most of the employing organisations put more emphasis on a person's attitudes while hiring him for employment. These organisations have a feeling that people can be made to learn, their skills can be developed, but when it comes to attitudes, the organisations feel that these cannot be changed. Therefore, employ only those people who have positive attitudes because with positive attitudes, a person will take care of his skills and knowledge. This is true not only for employment but it is true for all walks of life. If your attitudes are positive, you can develop skills and knowledge required for performing your job in a better way.

ROLE OF POSITIVE ATTITUDES

Positive attitudes are your positive thinking towards people, objects, ideas, and other things with which you interact. All these elements have a combination of both positive and negative aspects in varying proportion. If you have positive thinking towards these, you will see more positive aspects in these which energise you. If you have negative thinking towards these, you will see more negative aspects in these which discourage you. While energising aspect leads you to success, discouraging aspect leads you to failure. In general, positive attitudes help in the following manner:

1. To foresee opportunities.
2. To work in right perspective.
3. To overcome frustration.

Let us see how positive attitudes help you in the above areas.

To Foresee Opportunities

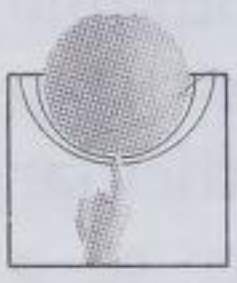
The environment in which people work provides lot of opportunities and threats. An opportunity is a favourable condition in the environment which enables people to strengthen their position. A threat is an unfavourable condition in the environment which causes a risk to people's position. However, whether a particular phenomenon of the environment is an opportunity or a threat is a matter of people's perception. People with negative attitudes treat an environmental phenomenon as a threat while people with positive attitudes treat the same phenomenon as an opportunity. Consider the following example:

Scope for Shoe Market

Bata Shoe Company sent its two marketing research teams independently to guage market potential for its shoes in African continent. Both the teams surveyed the shoe-wearing habits of people in a number of countries and both the teams observed that people were not wearing shoes at all. When both the teams arrived at the head office of the company, they presented their reports to management. The first team mentioned in its report, "There is no scope of marketing shoes in African continent as no one wears shoes there." The second team mentioned in its report, "There is very high scope of marketing shoes in African continent as no one has shoes."

Look at how the same environmental phenomenon has been interpreted by two teams having different attitudes.

The team having negative attitudes saw this phenomenon as a threat while the team having positive attitudes saw it as an opportunity. Thus, opportunity or threat does not exist merely in the environment; it exists in one's mind too. If you have positive attitudes, you tend to emphasise opportunities. When you have negative attitudes, you tend to emphasise threats. In fact, no opportunity is completely devoid of a threat. Similarly, no threat is completely devoid of an opportunity. Both exist in combination, the differentiating factor is how you interpret it, and your attitudes play a significant role in this. Take an example:



Roaring Success of Walkman

Akio Morita, Chairman of Sony Corporation, Japan, asked his research and design engineers to design a walkman (a mini-cassette player). Pat came the reply from the engineers and marketing personnel that this would not succeed in the market as people had got accustomed of standard-sized cassette players (negative attitudes about walkman). But Akio Morita insisted on that and walkman made a roaring success.

Foreseeing opportunities based on positive attitudes is not limited to only business field but it is relevant in other fields too. With positive attitudes, you will find numerous opportunities. With negative attitudes, you will find numerous threats.

To Work in Right Perspective

Every work has two dimensions—content and context. While content of the work is what is being done, context is the environment in which the work is being done. Both are important for accomplishing the work successfully. Content and context, taken together, determine the work's perspective. People with negative attitudes develop a feeling that their work is inferior to others or that their

working conditions are inferior to others, while people with positive attitudes have no such feeling. When people develop negative feelings towards their work and working conditions, they do not put their best efforts in performing their work. Half-hearted efforts bring only unsatisfactory results. If this happens for a long time, people develop apathy to their work and they become incapable of doing any type of work. This is the reason why most of the Japanese companies ask their new recruits to do some public service like to rake some public gardens in the morning, or to go from house to house offering to do something free, and so on. After doing all these, the new recruits start looking at the work from the perspective of 'dignity of labour' and think that it is not the work that determines whether or not they enjoy it, but the attitudes that they bring to it.

To see your work in right perspective, it is essential that you develop right attitudes towards your work. If this happens, your work and working conditions will appear joyful to you. When you compare your work with that of others, you normally compare two different sides of the work. You compare only those aspects of the work with which you are quite familiar. But the reality is that you are familiar with both positive and negative sides of your work but you are familiar with only positive side of others' work. If you do not have positive attitudes, you tend to compare negative side of your work with positive side of others' work. How fair this comparison is, you judge yourself. With positive attitudes, you can do away with such a comparison. Sometime back, one of my friends who is in business narrated the following event:

Old Business that Worked

The son of my friend's relative came to discuss his proposal for starting a new business. The son inherited a business from his father who withdrew from it because of health

reason but the son was not interested to carry on this business though he knew all ins and outs of this business. My friend asked the reason for switching over from the present business. In his reply, the son told, "This business has high competition and requires very hard work." My friend told him, "There is no business which is free from competition and does not require hard work." The son could not feel convinced and told, "My friends are doing businesses that do not have high competition and do not require that kind of hard work." My friend contacted his relative in the evening on the same day and discussed about the wavering approach of the son. Both decided that the son should work with each of his friend's business turn by turn for a week. The son agreed with this proposal and worked for about a month with the businesses of his friends. At the end of this period, he came back to my friend with his father and told, "Now I realise that my present business is much better than those of my friends." He took active interest in his present business and did quite well.

Why did the son change his attitude towards his business? Earlier, he used to compare the negative aspects of his business—high competition and hard work—with the positive aspects of his friends' businesses. When he knew both positive and negative aspects of his friends' businesses, he understood the reality and changed his attitude. Do people not suffer because they do not try to see their work in right perspective?

To Overcome Frustration

Journey of being a high achiever is quite long. It is full of excitement and gratification. But at the same time, it is full of frustration too. Frustration is the accumulated tension that generates when people are not able to achieve their desired goals. The assumption behind the continuity of effort is that it will bring desired result. When this does not happen, people experience frustration. In order to overcome this, they try to put better effort. Still there is a

possibility that it does not bring the desired result. When such an effort fails repeatedly, people develop long-run frustration which begins to build emotional disorders that interfere with people's ability to function effectively. Everyone of us may experience such a situation or might have experienced in the past. Higher is the level of your goals, higher is the possibility of occurrence of frustration.

There are primarily two types of sources that block goal achievement and cause frustration—aspiration-effort mismatch and external factors.

Aspiration-Effort Mismatch

When the level of aspiration of a person is higher in comparison to his efforts to fulfil the aspiration, the person often fails in his efforts and feels frustration. This mismatch between the levels of aspiration and efforts is noticeable in every walk of life. With the result, we find numerous frustrated people in the society.

External Factors

Besides aspiration-effort mismatch, there are certain factors external to a person that may block his goal-achievement. Such factors are excessive competition, unethical social practices to put a person in an advantageous position as compared to others, and the events on which the person does not have control like accident, natural calamities, etc.

If you analyse both sets of factors causing frustration, you will find that while the external factors are trivial, the aspiration-effort mismatch is basic. Unfortunately, persons lacking positive attitudes emphasise external factors as the root cause of their frustration. In order to overcome their frustration, they adopt two practices—compromise and withdrawal. In compromise, people try to make adjustment with the situation either by decreasing the level of their aspiration or by blaming their bad luck. In withdrawal, people try to leave the situation that has caused frustration. If they are not able to leave the situation physically, they

leave it mentally. They divert their attention towards such things which give them immediate satisfaction like being alcoholic, drug abuse, etc. In extreme cases, they withdraw themselves physically by committing suicide without caring that *"suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem"* as Abigail Van Buren has put it.

People lacking positive attitudes do not understand their problem or do not try to understand it. If they understand their problem in right perspective, they can find its solution. Charles Kettering has said that:

> ***It is not that people can't see the solution. It is that they can't see the problem.***

The basic problem with most of such frustrated people is that they want success in an easy way which is far from reality. Success requires much more efforts in a well-directed way than what these people are ready to put. They misplace their efforts and when the result is unfavourable, they put blames on others, particularly on their bad luck and adopt different forms of flight.

People having positive attitudes go into deep to locate their problem causing failure and frustration. In analysing the problem, they put more emphasis on the root cause, that is, aspiration-effort mismatch and lesser emphasis on trivial cause, that is, external factors. Once the real problem is identified, it has its solution too. A problem that has no solution is not a problem by definition; it is an impossibility. If you have positive attitudes, you may take your problem causing frustration in this perspective. Through this way, you may get its solution too. External factors may create adverse situation. With your positive attitudes, you will be able to work in adversity even with greater force for doing better. Those who work better in adversity achieve great height of success. Remember:

> ***In general, birds fly faster with the wind but the swan flies faster against the wind. That is why it is known as heaven's bird.***

FACTORS THAT AFFECT ATTITUDE FORMATION

Attitude formation is a learned process; it is not a biological process. Therefore, attitudes, both positive and negative, can be developed over the period of time. In fact, attitude formation starts at the very early stage of one's life and it continues throughout the life. Therefore, if you want to develop positive attitudes, you must be aware of those factors that affect attitude formation. Broadly, the factors that affect attitude formation are grouped into three categories:

1. Environment.
2. Education.
3. Experience.

Let us see how each of these factors affects attitude formation.

Environment

Everyone of us takes our action in an environment. Environment consists of those factors that lie outside you. More specifically, the important environmental factors that shape your attitudes are as follows:

1. Your home environment.
2. Your friendship group.
3. Your colleagues.
4. Your work environment.
5. Social beliefs and traditions.
6. Cultural and religious factors.
7. Legal and political factors.
8. Media—television, radio, movies, newspapers, etc.

While first seven factors are basic, media affect your attitudes by projecting a happening in the environment in a particular way. Some of the above factors are comparatively more stable and change only after a long period of time like social beliefs and traditions, cultural

and religious factors, and to some extent, legal and political factors. Other factors are comparatively less stable and take much shorter time to change like home environment, friendship group, colleagues, and work environment. Generally, the environment which is nearest to you affects you the most. Thus, local environment affects you the most followed by regional, national, and international environment in that order.

Generally, there is a tendency of people to give back the same thing to their environment which they receive from it. This tendency implies that if you are working in a negative environment, you tend to develop negative attitudes. If you are working in a positive environment, you tend to develop positive attitudes. This is the reason why two persons having the same biological features but brought up in different environment develop different attitudes. Since our country is geographically very large with lot of diversity, often, we find that people coming from different regions have different attitudes. Let us take an example:

Why a Business?

When I was with South Gujarat University, Surat (India's western region), I used to ask my students in their final semester about their career plan at the end of their study. Most of the students coming from western region used to plan to go for service initially and thereafter to start their own business. Some of the students used to have plan to join their family business. One student coming from eastern region told that he would be in service only. I asked him the reason for this and he promised to give its reply to me personally. Later, he disclosed to me, "If I go for business, it is possible that I may earn lot of money. But my neighbours, acquaintances, and relatives will feel that I was not able to get any service and that is why I have started business."

You can see the impact of environmental factors on shaping the attitudes. In fact, people of every country have certain attitudes, either positive or negative, which are so much ingrained that these cannot be changed easily. These attitudes either push the country forward or pull it back. The country which has positive environment, its people develop positive attitudes; the country which has negative environment, its people develop negative attitudes because one's attitudes must match with environmental demands.

Education

Education is another factor which shapes the attitudes of people. Education is the understanding and interpretation of knowledge in a particular discipline. It develops a logical and rational mind that can determine relationships among pertinent variables to understand a phenomenon. Education aims at imparting and developing qualities of mind and character and understanding of basic principles. Ideally speaking, education has three basic objectives— developing knowledge relevant to the discipline concerned, developing skills in the relevant field, and developing positive attitudes to solve the problems in the relevant area. Education may be both formal and informal. Through formal education, one can get a certificate, degree, diploma as the case may be. However, the present formal education puts maximum emphasis on knowledge, lesser emphasis on developing skills, and the least emphasis on developing positive attitudes. This is happening not only in India but this is happening in other countries too. For example, the research study of Harvard University, USA, suggests that:

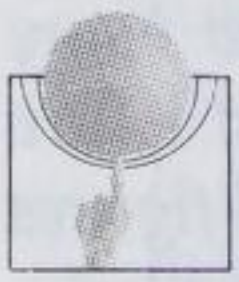
> *When people get jobs, eighty-five per cent of the time it is because of their attitudes, and only fifteen per cent of the time because of how smart they are and how many facts and figures they know. Surprisingly, almost entire education expenses are incurred to teach facts and figures which account for only fifteen per cent success in work.*

Looking at the lacuna of formal education, most of the forward-looking persons supplement it with informal

education which helps in developing skills and attitudes. Education, being a continuous process, is not limited to schools, colleges, and universities only but extends beyond that. Development through self-study is very common with many people. They feel that real education begins after finishing the formal education which teaches us the realities while the formal education helps in passing the examination to obtain a degree. This feeling is not fully ungrounded looking at the present education system. It is the real type of education that is important in shaping your attitudes. If you read positive literature, you will develop positive attitudes. If you read negative literature, you will develop negative attitudes.

Experience

Your own experience is the best teacher to help you develop attitudes, either positive or negative. It also helps to modify your previously-held attitudes which do not suit you. This happens because people take new stand about a person, object, or idea in the light of new information which is more realistic than the information on the basis of which the previously-held attitudes have been developed. Often, at the childhood stage or adolescence stage which lasts up to 19 years of age, people tend to believe a piece of information as it stands without analysing its reality or real implications. With the result, they develop a feeling about a phenomenon based on this information. When they grow up, they have access to more information about the same phenomenon and change their attitudes accordingly. In the Shakespeare's famous book 'Merchant of Venice', jews have been portrayed as the most cruel people. To recapitulate, the story is as follows:



A Pound of Flesh

There were two merchants and both of them were friends too. One was Jew and another was Christian. Once the

Christian merchant needed some money and approached the Jew merchant for the purpose. Jew merchant agreed to lend money but he put a condition that if money was not returned by the due date, he would cut a pound of flesh from borrower's body. The borrower agreed to this condition as he was very sure that he would be able to return the money even before the due date. Unfortunately, the borrower could not return the money on due date and the Jew was getting himself ready to cut a pound of flesh from the borrower's body. The borrower even requested that this should not be done and he should be given more time to repay the loan. His request was turned down by the Jew merchant and the matter went to the court. The court ordered that according to the condition, the Jew merchant would cut a pound of flesh from the Christian merchant's body but by ensuring that not a single drop of blood flows from the body.

If someone reads this story in his childhood, he will develop an attitude that Jews are very cruel without caring that this is just a story. Many such things happen in our childhood which cause us to develop our attitudes. Later on, when we get further information, we try to rectify our attitudes in right perspective.

The above phenomenon is not restricted only to childhood stage of the life but may happen in our later part of life. People tend to develop favourable or unfavourable attitudes about others based on one or two positive or negative attributes. When such persons meet frequently, people realise that these persons are not in accordance with what they have projected initially but are quite different. So, if you have formed your attitudes about some persons based on your observations of their limited attributes, subsequently, you may change your attitudes towards them based on the real picture. This may also happen with objects and ideas too. Thus, with continuous experience, you go on developing those attitudes which are gratifying to you.

STEPS TO DEVELOP POSITIVE ATTITUDES

After you have developed awareness about the factors that shape your attitudes, you are in a better position to develop positive attitudes. However, developing positive attitudes is not one-shot action but it requires determination on your part; it requires certain steps that must be followed continuously. With your strong determination, you put your efforts vigorously for developing positive attitudes while understanding of various steps quickens your process of developing positive attitudes. The various steps that you should follow for developing positive attitudes are as follows:

1. Become aware of your attitudes.
2. Develop OK life position.
3. Look for positive.
4. Develop cooperative spirit.
5. Stay away from negative.

Let us see what actions are involved in each of these steps and how you can follow these actions.

Become Aware of Your Attitudes

People have both positive and negative attitudes at the same time. They have certain positive attitudes on some aspects but at the same time, they have certain negative attitudes on other aspects. This is true for you too. Therefore, it is essential that you must become aware about your attitudes that you presently have. After identifying your total attitudes, you classify them into positive and negative. The basis of such a classification will be contribution of each of your attitudes in achieving your goals. If an attitude contributes to the achievement of your goals, it can be classified as positive. If an attitude hinders the achievement of your goals, it may be classified as negative. Development of positive attitudes requires strengthening your positive attitudes and weakening, and

subsequently eliminating, your negative attitudes. Both these exercises should be taken simultaneously.

Weakening or eliminating your negative attitudes is very important because only after their elimination, their places will be taken by positive attitudes. C. K. Prahalad, the well-known management educationist, has said that:

> *As important as it is to learn for the future, it is equally important to unlearn the past and remove its bagasse.*

If you look at a farmer, you will find that he clears his field first before planting new seeds. He does so in order to protect his new crop from the impact of old crop. Similar is the case with you. If you want to develop positive attitudes, get away from your negative attitudes. Without clearing negative attitudes, positive attitudes are hard to develop. If both exist simultaneously on a particular phenomenon, they create conflict in your mind till you get rid of one set of attitudes. Since your objective is to develop positive attitudes, clearing negative set of attitudes is desirable.

Develop OK Life Position

Life position consists of assumptions that a person makes about himself and other persons with whom he interacts. These assumptions largely affect one's approach in dealing with other persons. Such assumptions continue to develop over the period of time. Those assumptions that are not gratifying are replaced by those assumptions that are gratifying. The assumptions that are good are OK; the assumptions that are bad are not OK. The life position that one may adopt is of four types:

1. I am OK-you are OK.
2. I am OK-you are not OK.
3. I am not OK-you are OK.
4. I am not OK-you are not OK.

Let us see what kind of approach is adopted in each type of life position.

1. *I am OK-you are OK.* People with I am OK-you are OK life position think and behave rationally. They tend to accept the significance of others and feel that life is worth living. They display a much higher level of give and take approach. They are able to express freely what they feel good about others because it offers little threat to them. Such a position leads to solve problems constructively.
2. *I am OK-you are not OK.* People having this life position develop a feeling that they themselves are right but others are wrong. They lack trust and confidence in the intelligence, skills, and talent of others. They tend to point out the flaws and bad things about others and rarely give any warm and genuinely-carrying feelings. Even they blame others for their own wrong deeds.
3. *I am not OK-you are OK.* People with this life position develop a feeling that they are less competent as compared to others; others can do many things which they cannot do themselves. People with this life position always grumble for one thing or the other. They tend to give and receive bad feelings and often show erratic behaviour.
4. *I am not OK-you are not OK.* People with this life position lead a desperate life. They lose interest in their life and feel that life is meaningless. They do not make decisions in time; make stupid mistakes or otherwise provoke others to give them negative reactions. They feel that they lack personal potency.

The most desirable life position is I am OK-you are OK. Therefore, you must develop I am OK-you are OK life position as this will help you to act more rationally. It helps in acceptance of yourself and others. There are two approaches in trusting others:

1. Trust everyone unless evidence goes contrary.
2. Do not trust anyone unless evidence goes contrary.

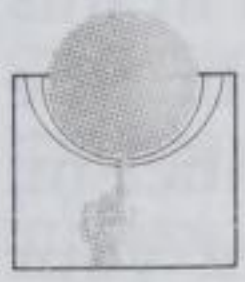
If you have I am OK-you are OK life position, you rely on the first approach. Remember:

> ***Trust is a two-way traffic. If you trust others, others will also trust you. If you distrust others, others have right to distrust you.***

I am OK-you are OK life position can be developed by thinking continuously in this direction. If you think continuously, it becomes a part of your personality over the period of time. With the result, you tend to behave positively.

Look for Positive

Every aspect of life and environment in which we live has two aspects—positive and negative. If you look for positive, you become positive. If you look for negative, you become negative. This approach does not apply to persons only but extends to objects, information, ideas, and other elements too. If you try to look for positive, you have to be a good finder. A swan drinks only milk and leaves water even though both are mixed together because swan is a good finder. In the same way, you can find only positive if you become a good finder, no matter how deep it is located. Take the following example:



Look for Gold and Not Dirt

Andrew Carnegie started his career by doing some odd job but with his continued efforts, he established the largest steel plant in the USA. During the process of establishing and managing his steel plant, he mobilised highly-dedicated people around him to work for the steel plant. He was so confident about his people that he used to say, "Take my factory away, take my all assets away, but leave my people with me and I will re-establish myself within a

short time." One day, one of his acquaintances asked him, "How do you deal with your people?" Carnegie replied, "Dealing with people is like digging gold. When you go digging for an ounce of gold, you have to move tons of dirt to get an ounce of gold. But when you go digging, you don't go looking for the dirt, you go looking for the gold."

So try to look for the gold and not the dirt that you have to dig for finding the gold. In the same way, if you try to find out positive things from your environment, there are plenty of such things. The only thing that you have to do is to develop an attitude that positive things exist in the environment and you try to find out such positive things. In the same way, for those persons who look for negative, there are such things in plenty. They even find out faults in paradise; they find imperfection in perfection. Instead of looking at the beauty of rose flowers, they curse rose plant because it has thorns. They become critics just to criticise everything. Keep yourself away from looking only faults everywhere.

Looking for positive does not mean that you accept anything based on its positive side only. You should evaluate the thing in right perspective and not merely to find out its faults only. Even when someone criticises your efforts, do not take such a criticism negatively. There is a possibility that some good advice for you is hidden in this criticism. Therefore, instead of feeling annoyed on the criticism, you try to find out the basis for such a criticism. Analysis of such a basis may help you to reorient your efforts in a positive way.

Develop Cooperative Spirit

In order to become positive, you need to develop cooperative spirit. Cooperation is a motto; it is a spirit of give and take, that is, helping others and getting help from others. No person is an island in himself. To some extent, he is dependent on others. In the same way, others are

dependent on him. Because of this interdependency, one person affects others and, in turn, is affected by others. In such a situation, you can develop better attitudes towards others if you adopt cooperative approach and not conflicting approach. For developing cooperative approach, two elements are essential—develop empathy and develop attitude of gratitude.

Develop Empathy

Empathy is the power of entering into another's personality and imaginatively experiencing his experiences. In other words, empathy relates to observing things or situations from others' point of view. The ability to look at things objectively and understanding them from others' point of view is important for mutual cooperation. When you develop empathy, you are able to see what makes other fellows to think as they do. Even though it is not necessary that you always agree with what others think on a particular phenomenon, it will give you an opportunity to explain the phenomenon to them. Based on this, others may take their stand on the phenomenon in right perspective. You can develop empathy by developing trust and respect for others, their rights, beliefs, feelings, and values.

Develop Attitude of Gratitude

For developing cooperative spirit, you need to develop an attitude of gratitude, that is, to develop warm and friendly feelings towards a benefactor. If you have this kind of feeling towards others, they tend to have the same kind of feeling towards you. If you give something to them, they will give something better in return. John Ruskin has written that:

> *Give a little love to a child, and you get a great deal back.*

Unfortunately, in India, there are numerous persons who follow the principle that, "those persons are happy

whose neighbours are unhappy.'' This may be happening in other countries too. This is a very negative attitude. These people forget that if their neighbours are unhappy, this unhappiness may percolate to them also. If a person's house catches fire (trouble), it affects the neighbours' houses first. Therefore, avoid such an attitude and develop the attitude of gratitude. Gratitude should be in the form of your attitude and not merely in the form of a kind of showing like merely saying words like 'thank you', 'I have full sympathy with you', or similar words uttered by your tongue and not by your heart. Whatever you say as a matter of gratitude, you must mean it; you must adhere to it.

Stay Away from Negative

For developing positive attitudes, staying away from negative is as important as looking for positive. If you stay away from negative, it helps you to safeguard yourself from the negative influences. If you plant banana tree and plum tree together, plum tree will harm banana tree. A banana tree has long and soft leaves while plum tree has thorns. When banana leaves are on move because of wind, thorns of plum tree cause damage to them. When banana leaves are damaged, it does not give good quality fruit. In the same way, if you have negative things around you, these are likely to affect your attitudes adversely. Therefore, it is necessary that you get away from the influences of all such negative things. Though there may be numerous negative things in your vicinity, you must get away from three elements—negative people, negative movies and entertainment programmes, and superstitions. These three elements are highly influential. Let us see how they influence the behaviour of others adversely.

Negative People

You tend to behave like others who are in your group or with whom you interact. If you are in the company of high

achievers, you tend to develop attitudes for high achievement. If you are in the company of negative people, you tend to develop negative attitudes. This happens because of learning process. Through learning process, people emulate the behaviour of others. Therefore, in order to protect yourself from the influences of negative people, it is necessary that you get away from these people. This requires you to identify negative people. The negative people, generally, have the following characteristics:

1. Most of the time, they complain about one thing or the other.
2. They criticise the efforts of others even if these efforts are commendable.
3. They always look for faults in others.
4. They forget their blessings and count their troubles.
5. They feel helpless even in the case of small matters.
6. They have pessimistic approach.
7. They feel that they are unlucky.
8. They derive pleasure when others are in trouble.
9. They have negative feelings to every thing.

When you are in the company of such people, there is a possibility that you also develop the same characteristics. Therefore, you should get rid of such people. If you have to be with them for a brief time because of any compulsion, only hear what they say and forget it as quickly as possible. Remember: people make their opinion about you on the basis of the type of people in whose company you are in. Simultaneously, they make their opinion about you on the basis of the type of people to whom you avoid.

Negative Movies and Entertainment Programmes

Negative movies and other entertainment programmes have created delirious effect on the society in general and on younger people in particular. This process still continues. When you see movies and other entertainment programmes like television programmes, you tend to imitate the characters shown in these programmes. If such programmes are

negative, the characters shown in these programmes have to be negative. If you follow what these characters do, you tend to develop bad habits. Once these habits are developed, it is very difficult to overcome these. In fact, sociologists believe that many types of crimes like robbery, rape, dehumanising women, alcoholism, drug abuse, etc. have been caused by negative movies and similar other entertainment programmes. The crime rate is increasing day-by-day because of increasing volume of such negative programmes. Therefore, try to avoid all those programmes which are likely to develop negative attitudes in you.

Superstitions

Superstitions are another means that damage your self-esteem and attitudes and such superstitions are plenty in every society not only in developing world but also in developed world, though in developing world, these are over-emphasised. Superstitions are deep-rooted but unfounded general beliefs. These beliefs are generally based on ignorance and irrational approach towards omens, divination, sorcery, etc. Look at some of the common superstitions: if you are ready to proceed from your home for some urgent work and someone sneezes, do not proceed; if you are going for some work and a cat crosses you from your left side (at few places, it may be right side also), do not proceed; do not go in a particular direction on a particular day even if your work is urgent; and so on. If you believe that these superstitions are true, no logic against these is adequate. If you do not believe in these superstitions, no logic against these is required. Superstitions are not based on logic; they are based on belief.

Those who believe in superstitions feel that if they do not adhere to these superstitions, they will be in trouble even without their fault. This feeling gets reinforced when a believer in superstitions is having some trouble when he has not adhered to a superstition. He does not realise that the real cause of trouble is something else and not the

superstition. This type of feeling compels people to adhere to superstitions. However, adhering to superstitions has a cost in terms of wastage of time, money, and effort. Sometimes, this cost may be quite high in the form of missing a good opportunity. Superstitions also cause low self-esteem in people. Therefore, you must avoid such superstitions. You must develop a feeling that these superstitions have nothing to do with you and not the feeling of fear from these superstitions. Someone has said long back:

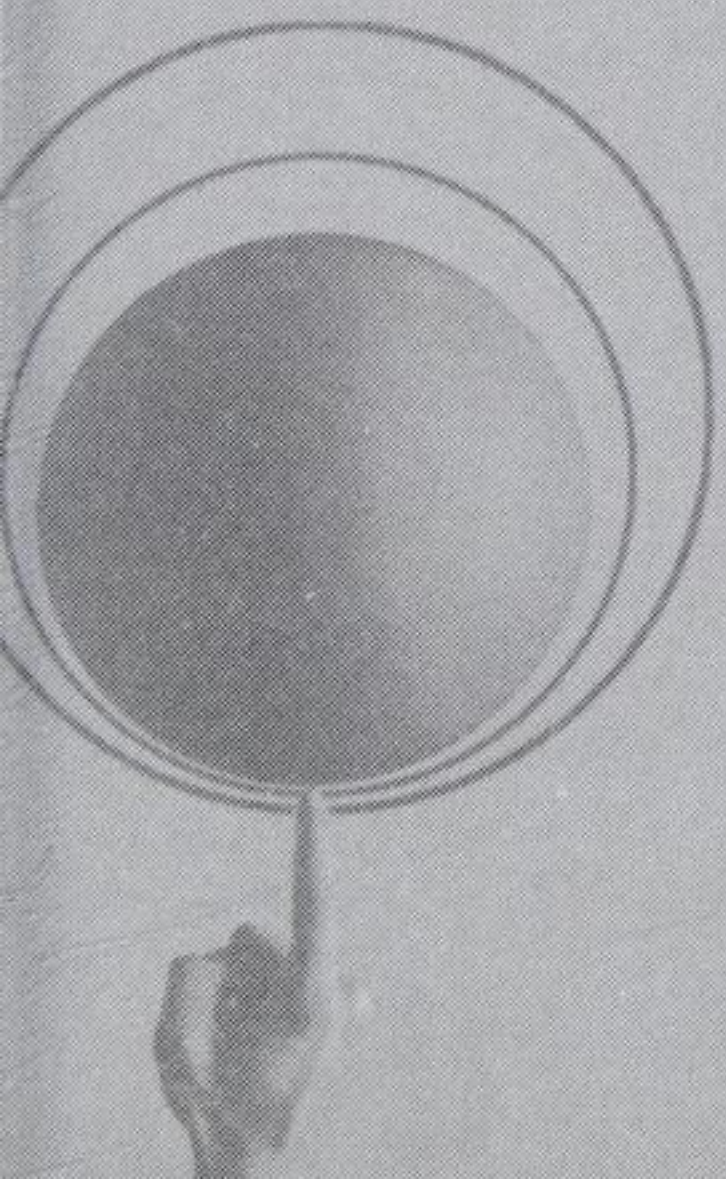
> *We fear things in proportion to our ignorance to them.*

Superstitions are based on our ignorance. If you overcome this ignorance, you can overcome superstitions easily.

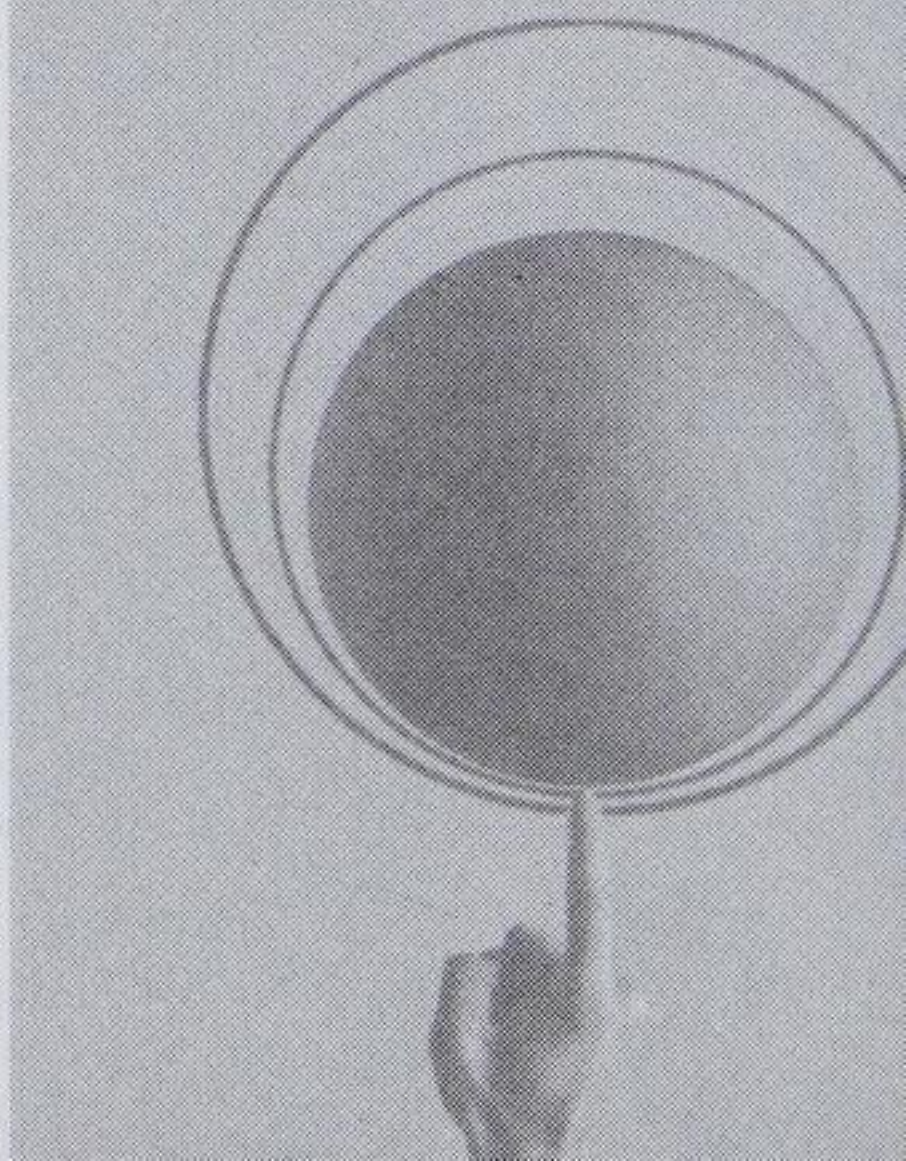
YOUR ACTION PLAN

1. Identify your attitudes, both positive and negative, towards yourself, your family members, neighbours, friends, colleagues, work, and working conditions. If you have some negative attitudes towards any of these, find out their reasons. There is a possibility that your negative attitudes have been founded on wrong basis. Understanding of reasons behind negative attitudes will help you to change these.

2. Prepare a list of negative attitudes that you want to change and a list of positive attitudes that you want to reinforce and reasons thereof.



3. Write down the steps that you will like to take to develop positive attitudes. Prepare time-frame for each of these steps and the way you will use each of these steps at:
   a. Your family.
   b. Your workplace.
   c. Your social affairs.



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DEVELOP VALUES

Doing Right Things for Right Reasons

LIKE high self-esteem and positive thinking, values contribute to high achievement. High achievers stick to values and compromise on petty things while low achievers stick to petty things and compromise on values. However, what are values and what are petty things are not always clear to people. Therefore, let us discuss this concept. Values represent basic convictions that a specific mode of conduct is personally and socially preferable to an opposite mode of conduct. The elements that are not in the form of convictions are petty things. Conviction is a strong belief about a particular mode of conduct that guides our behaviour. On the basis of this, we judge what is right or wrong. Values are highly ingrained in a person which are applied consistently irrespective of the type of situations.

Values are a learned phenomenon and the values that a person learns can be divided into two categories—terminal values and instrumental values. Terminal values lead to ends to be achieved like comfortable life, prestige in the society, sense of high achievement, and so on. Instrumental values relate to means for achieving desired ends like being ambitious, being hard working, practising honesty, and so on. Thus, right values represent doing right things for right reasons. If you have right values, you will not only choose the right ends to achieve but also use right means to achieve these. If you take away any one of these, either ends or means, your values do not remain right. What are right ends and right means are determined in social context in which you try to achieve something. It implies that personal values have to be seen in the context of social values. Social values reflect a system of shared beliefs about desired goals and norms for human conduct. Since values of one society may differ from another because of cultural differences, the criteria on the basis of which the dominant social values can be distinguished are:

1. extensiveness—the proportion of the population that holds a particular value,

2. duration—the length of time a value has been held to be important,
3. intensity—the severity of social sanctions that are connected to a particular value,
4. prestige of value carriers—the status and symbols that are associated with value carriers.

TEST WHETHER YOUR VALUES ARE RIGHT

Because of ambiguity that prevails in any society about judging whether people's values are right or wrong, people are not very sure what values are right and what values are wrong. Often values and practices are mixed together. With the result, people are not clear what are values and what are practices. Values are your convictions about a particular aspect of a social phenomenon and these convictions go deep in your mind. Practices are your overt behaviour (behaviour that can be observed by others). Practices are influenced by your values and not vice versa. On the basis of these practices, others judge whether your values are right or wrong. You can judge your own values too. While judging your own values, put the following questions to yourself and give their answers honestly:

1. Do your values conform to your conscience? Your conscience puts you in touch with something within yourself deeper than your thoughts; it is your innerself.
2. Do your values match with those of high achievers in your field or the model persons that you have in mind to shape your behaviour?
3. Are your values likely to contribute for betterment of your profession in particular and society in general?

If the answers of the above questions are yes, your values are right. If the answer of any of the question is negative, check your values yourself again and reshape these rightly.

FACTORS THAT SHAPE VALUES

Values are not natural but are inculcated over the period of time by different organs of the society in which you live. These social organs are:

1. Family.
2. Education system.
3. Social groups.
4. Social culture.

All these organs play different role in your life but they have one thing in common so far as value formation is concerned, that is, they are supposed to inculcate right values. The basic process of value formation by these organs is that they prescribe what is right or wrong for people. In order to ensure that right things are followed by people, these organs develop a reward and punishment system. When people adopt right things, they are rewarded. When they adopt wrong things, they are punished. In order to get reward and avoid punishment, people tend to adopt right things. Reward and punishment are not necessarily in material form but also in socio-psychological form, that is, giving social acceptance or rejection. This process occurs in daily life of people which helps them in developing right values. When the process of giving reward or punishment is reversed, people tend to develop wrong values. Let us see how various social organs are relevant in shaping values of people.

Family

Value formation starts since the childhood of a person and the family has the most important role to play in shaping the values of family members, particularly the younger persons. In the family, parents have more effect on the development of values of children as compared to other members of the family. That is why persons belonging to those families have right values whose parents themselves have such values. Similarly, persons belonging to those

families have wrong values whose parents themselves have wrong values. Consider the following event:

Parents should be Sentenced

A boy adopted the practice of stealing small things of his friends. He continued this practice and became a robber. He was caught by police in robbery and was sentenced by the judge. While sentencing the boy, the judge asked him if he had anything to say about it. The boy replied, "Yes, your honour. I want that my parents should also be put in the jail." The judge asked surprisingly, "Why should your parents be put in the jail? They have not committed robbery; only you have committed robbery." The boy answered in a composed manner, "Yes, they have not committed robbery but they have made me a robber. For the first time, I stole a pencil but my parents did not do anything even though they knew it. I stole a book and they ignored it. I continued this practice but at no stage my parents taught me that this was bad. This has led me to become robber. Therefore, my parents should be sentenced for making me a robber."

What does this event tell us? It tells that if the parents do not take care to stop their children from a bad practice, the children will assume that this practice is right and behave accordingly. Children learn from their families what they are made to learn. Learning at the initial childhood goes deep in the mind that subsequently becomes values and guide people's behaviour. Substituting this initial learning is quite difficult, though not impossible.

Education System

Education system of a society plays a significant role in shaping the values of its students. This role is more crucial at the primary stage as compared to later stage. At the initial education level when a child does not have exposure

to many worldly things, he tends to believe in what the education system gives him. This belief becomes the basis of developing values. At the later stage of education, the child tends to learn from many sources besides the education but the role of education at successive levels in shaping values goes on declining.

If the education system of a society or country is conducive for developing right values, its citizens tend to develop right values. In its absence, citizens have no direction about what they should do and what they should not. For example, in Japan, children are taught that working hard is the most important element irrespective of the nature of work itself. Similarly, children are taught to respect elder people irrespective of their relationship with them or the position they occupy in the society. This is the reason why Japanese have very high work-orientation and pay respect to their elders. Unfortunately, in many countries, primary education and even later education is devoid of value development. With the result, students are not adequately aware about what is right or wrong. They assume that what is right for themselves is right for others too. For example, Steven Muller, President (vice-chancellor in Indian context) of Johns Hopkins University, USA, has observed as follows about the present education system:

> *Universities are turning out highly skilled barbarians because we don't have a framework of values to young people, who more and more are searching for it.*

The present education system in India is not better than this. In order to overcome this anomaly, the Government of India is making some efforts by introducing courses at different levels that aim at developing right values.

Social Groups

Social groups have their impact on the behaviour of their members by prescribing the norms of behaviour and

forcing members to adhere to these norms. Social groups may be of two types based on the degree of freedom that a person has in joining or not joining a group—work group and informal group. A work group consists of persons who perform similar nature of activities and relationship of members of the group is prescribed through some rules. Such a group may be in the form of students of a class room meeting regularly, employees of a department of an organisation, and so on. Each member of such a group has to follow the norms of behaviour set for the group as a whole.

An informal group is formed by the people on their own in order to satisfy their socio-psychological needs like friendship group or other type of group. People develop norms of behaviour on their own and such norms are adhered to by all members. Those who do not adhere to group norms are penalised through the mechanism of social rejection. Such a group has more impact on shaping the values of people as compared to a work group. If such a group has developed certain norms which are favourable to development of right values, these values are inculcated in the members. If such norms are unfavourable, wrong values are likely to be inculcated. This is the reason why two children coming from the same family but developing affiliation to different groups have different sets of values.

Social Culture

All the above three factors operate within the context of the society which has its own culture that affects the operation of the above three factors. Culture at the social level includes the set of assumptions, beliefs, values, and norms that are commonly shared by people of that society. Thus, social values, being shared values, affect people's individual values, as social values affect people individually as well as in groups. When we talk that parents in families and teachers in schools should inculcate right values among children, we have these social values in our mind.

Here, a question that usually arises in the mind of many persons, particularly the young ones: why is there a deviation between social and individual values? This question becomes even more relevant in our present social context in which the age-old, well-established values are in jeopardy. The reason for this deviation is that people tend to change their attitudes towards certain elements of social values because of their exposure to new set of information. Because of the changed attitudes, they attempt to do something different that is not socially desirable but is personally gratifying. When this is personally gratifying, they feel that it is good for them. Gradually, it is embedded in their value system. When other people see this kind of behaviour as being gratifying to one set of people, these other people also tend to follow the same type of behaviour. With the result, a sub-culture emerges within the social culture. For example, people's attitudes towards money have changed considerably over the period of time because of international impact. Now more and more people are trying to earn more and more money without giving due consideration to the means that are adopted in the process. Similarly, you may find many other deviations. With the result, when the sizeable proportion of population follows deviant behaviour, it becomes the dominant values of a part of the society in the form of sub-culture. However, this kind of sub-culture does not remain in existence for sufficiently long time because of the pressure of wider social culture unless the social culture itself has certain drawbacks.

There are two types of deviants of social culture—those who deviate from the existing culture for their personal gains and those who deviate from the existing culture to correct the anomalies that exist in the culture. The first category of deviants ultimately go to doom while the second category of deviants become social heroes or even more.

ROLE OF VALUES

Values, in general, shape behaviour of people by developing feelings in them about what is right and wrong. Based on their values, people tend to perceive and judge others' behaviour, happenings in the enviornment, and the ultimate goals that should be achieved in the life. Thus, if you hold right values, these help you in:

1. Developing character.
2. Engaging in ethical behaviour.
3. Increasing credibility.
4. Achieving long-term goals.

Let us see how your right values help you pursuing all these.

Developing Character

Values help in building character provided these are right. If these are wrong, reverse is also true. Character is sometimes divided into two categories—good character and bad character. However, when we use the word character in general term, we refer this as good character and the persons who do not have such a character are often called as characterless. Thus, the word character has positive connotation and not indifferent connotation.

How do you define character? This question is relevant because a dictionary defines character in different ways like any essential feature or peculiarity of a person, his nature and personal appearance, the aggregate of special qualities which constitute personal or national individuality, moral qualities specially the reputation of possessing of such traits. Some of these descriptions have indifferent connotations while others have positive connotations, like moral qualities that people possess. Positive connotations are regarded by people as being character. Great Chinese philosopher Confucious has written that a man of character is:

1. One who does not blame others for his failure, nor does he laugh at those who fail in their attempts.
2. One who is of firm resolve and never quarrels with his opponents. He meets everyone with love and never takes sides of this group or that group.
3. One who accumulates virtues and shuns vices.
4. One who remains happy and keeps away from vanity.
5. One who always tries to know the truth.
6. One who comes to everybody's help unasked. But it is difficult to please him because he can be pleased by truth alone and not by flattery.
7. One who sees his own fault and not of others.
8. One who is friendly to all but is not attached to any.
9. One who considers his ability as his wealth and not the money.
10. One who is always mild and sober.

These traits of a person having character are quite similar to the right values that he holds. Thus, there is a linkage between right values and character irrespective of the situations you live in. If you have right values, nothing can stop you to possess character too.

Character has very important implication for you specially when you want to become high achiever. Following features have been held long in our society:

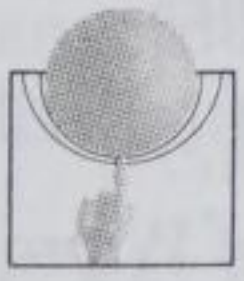
When wealth has gone, nothing has gone.
When health has gone, something has gone.
When character has gone, everything has gone.

Though many persons tend to believe that these features have reverse orientation because of too much emphasis on materialistic feeling, but this is not true. Even in this materialistic world, the richest persons of the world have strong character and they have become rich not by being characterless. This is true for India too. No person even in this materialistic world can become rich without character; he can become only relatively more rich than his

neighbours or in a limited region. Even if he becomes richer than others in such a limited area, very soon he will become poorer because in the absence of character, he is not able to protect his richness. Thus, you should not believe that the features enumerated above do not hold true in the present context. They hold true; only few low achievers feel that these have been reversed.

Engaging in Ethical Behaviour

Your right values help you in engaging in ethical behaviour. The concept of ethical behaviour has been derived from ethics. Ethics is the science of moral and prescribes mass moral principles that define what ought to be. In other words, it prescribes what is honest, true, fair, just, right, proper, and so on. Ethical behaviour is one that is based on these moral principles. Thus, ethical behaviour implies that you must be honest to you and to others with whom you deal. After all, honesty is the best policy in the long-run. Honesty means being just and fair. Honesty is a conviction and not just convenience. Convenience changes from situation to situation and from person to person while conviction remains intact in dealing with all situations and all persons. You must follow this even if it does not accrue any direct benefit to you. You must follow it even in small matter. Sometime back, one Professor of an Engineering College told me about the following event:



Everything is Going from My Heart

In an Engineering College, one Professor was invited as an expert to conduct viva-voce of engineering students in their final year. The expert conducted viva-voce along with another Professor of the college. During the process of conducting viva-voce, both the Professors awarded marks to students based on their perception about the students' answers. In the case of one student, expert awarded less marks and internal Professor awarded high marks. Looking

at the marks awarded by the expert, the internal Professor requested him to increase the marks of the student concerned to which the expert did not agree, though both of them were quite close friends because of their previous affiliation. The Professor argued further for increasing the marks of the student because of his vested interest and told to the expert, "Why don't you increase the marks? After all, nothing is going out from your pocket." After a pause, the expert said, "Yes, nothing is going from my pocket but everything is going from my heart. If I increase the marks, it will be injustice to other students and I will doubt my own integrity. If I doubt my own integrity, how can I prevent others in doubting my integrity? I am of the firm opinion that the most valuable asset of a teacher is his integrity. If this is lost, what asset will he show to his students?"

Though this may be a small event but it shows that persons with right values do not compromise with their integrity whatever the situation may be. Even in business field which is notorious for being one of the most unethical, businessmen, particularly the great businessmen, are putting very high emphasis on ethical behaviour which is to be followed by every person associated with their businesses. Though there are numerous examples, I give the following one to you:

We Will Not Compromise on Our Values

In 1973, when Azim Premji, the present Chairman of Wipro Limited, one of the most admired software companies in India, took over the control of Wipro from his father, he formulated beliefs and values to govern individual and company relationships with the highest standards of conduct and integrity. These beliefs and values give a common cause and a sense of purpose across the businesses, making Wipro in essence one company. Premji comments that, "To meet challenges, we are prepared to change everything about

ourselves except our beliefs and values, as they alone guide, govern, and bind us together." Though during 1970s and 80s, the company faced some problems in adhering to these beliefs and values because of excessive control by the government, but it never compromised on these beliefs and values. From 1990s and onward, following of these beliefs and values became much easier because of increasing economic liberalisation. These beliefs and values are followed in true spirit. If any person of the company is found short of integrity, he is sacked regardless of his rank in the company.

As against ethical behaviour which shows positive results both in the short-term as well as long-term, unethical behaviour may show positive results in the short-term to the person concerned but certainly, it shows negative results in the long-term. Because of this short-term aberration, people tend to feel that unethical behaviour is paying. They do not consider that the long-term implication of such a behaviour is dooming. Consider what happens with the people ultimately who are involved in bribery and other unethical means to gain personal advantages. They may appear to be better off in the short-term but ultimately they are put behind the bar. Even if this does not happen, they lose the meaning of their life, the life for which they engage themselves in unethical behaviour. This is why many persons who are engaged in any unethical behaviour commit suicide or change their life pattern at the earliest.

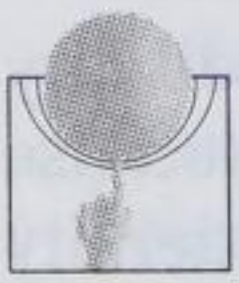
Increasing Credibility

Right values help in increasing your credibility. Credibility of a person is essential phenomenon for him because through it, he protects his identity in the society. Identity of a person refers to "I" or "me" concept, that is, how you perceive 'what you are' and your perception of how others feel 'what you are'. Both these taken together define your identity and this identity is not determined by what

position you occupy, what type of education you have received, and what kind of things you possess. It is determined by your behaviour towards yourself and others, that is, what kind of person you are. This is based on your credibility. Your credibility is dependent on your trustworthiness, transparency, and honesty.

Turstworthiness refers to the level of security that you may feel towards others and the extent to which you are viewed by others as fair, honest, and just in dealing with others. Transparency refers to the extent your decisions are being verifiable by others. Verification of your decisions is done by others on the basis of consistency that you adopt in making decisions on the similar issues and in the similar conditions. Transparency goes up when there is consistency in your decisions. Honesty refers to your commitment for maintaining high socio-psychological standards. Your right values help you in doing all these because what you do is supported by your heart and not by words alone. Persons who do not do all these by their hearts because of lack of right values, often waver in their deeds. They speak one thing and do another thing. Because of this contrast, people do not belive them and a credibility gap exists.

Credibility is very important for persons who are striving to become high achievers. High achievement is a social phenomenon which is recognised by people as such. If it is not backed up by credibility, people suspect even a high achievement. Building credibility is a long-drawn process but its tarnishing is a short one. Consider the following example:



Unethical Practice Led to Doom

A medical practitioner started his practice. Since he was professionally well-qualified, he attracted many patients. This process continued and more and more patients came. Very soon, he earned the reputation of being one of the

most capable doctors in the city. Lured by the passion of earning huge money in a relatively short period of time, he also opened a medical store in the premise in which his clinic was located. People thought that it was meant to facilitate patients but thing was otherwise. In order to get more commission on medicines, he started procuring medicines from sub-standard pharmaceutical companies. Most of times, he used to prescribe only those medicines which used to be available in his medical store. Because of sub-standard medicines, his patients started to take more time in curing their diseases. At the initial stage, people thought that this was a natural phenomenon. But this kind of practice was identified by people soon which changed their attitudes towards the doctor. With the result, where patients used to wait for their turn, the doctor used to wait for the patients. What a credibility gap in such a noble profession which doomed a doctor who otherwise might have become a high achiever.

Developing credibility is a long-drawn process but re-establishing lost credibility is a longer-drawn process.

Achieving Long-term Goals

Goals are the results that you want to achieve through your actions. These goals may be for short-term and long-term though both are interrelated. Long-term goals are your focus when you are involved in performing some actions. Your right values help you in achieving your long-term goals, that is, to become high achiever. Generally, people who do not strive to become high achiever tend to pursue short-term goals and people who strive to become high achiever tend to pursue long-term goals. This is simply because high achievement requires much more dedication and people with orientation for achieving short-term goals lack this dedication. That is why you find that more and more people tend to over-emphasise short-term goals and sacrify long-term goals. This is resulted into being winner by hook and crook. They believe that a win is win by

whatever method it comes. They forget that this hook and crook approach is not long-lasting; it may work for once or twice but not all the time, irrespective of the field where it is attempted.

In the present materialistic world, this hook and crook approach has become very common for many persons to get (not earn) more and more money in the shortest possible time. They treat money as the end and not a means. Is it true that money is an end in itself? Not, absolutely not. Money is a means for getting something else, for example, prestige in the society, comfortable life, peaceful life, and so on. Consider the following example:

What is the Role of Money?

A man used to go to sea-shore daily and spend considerable time lying on sand peacefully. One industrialist also used to go to the same place daily for a brief period. One day, the industrialist asked the man, "Why do you come here daily?" The man replied, "I come here to bathe in sun-shine amidst cool breeze. This gives me immense pleasure." The industrialist asked the man further, "Why don't you do some work?" In response to this, the man asked, "What will happen if I work?" The industrialist replied, "When you will work, you will earn money. Spend some and invest the residual. This way, you will become rich man." The man asked, "What will happen afterwards?" The industrialist replied, "Afterwards, you may come to sea-shore and bathe yourself in sun-shine." The man remarked, "After earning lot of money, if I have to do the same thing which I am doing at present, what is the role of money?"

What does this simple example tell us? Money is only means and not an end in itself. Reverting back to accumulating money by hook or crook, the question is: do people achieve what they want to achieve—prestige in the

society, comfortable and peaceful life by such money? Absolutely not because most of the time, they remain busy in protecting themselves from the wrath of legal provisions. Most of the time, they remain busy in adjusting their money or hiding it. Will they be able to enjoy comfortable and peaceful life in such a situation? The importance of money in the society cannot be denied but it is also true that money accumulated through unfair means is not that important. People with right values earn money and accumulate it for development while people with wrong values rob money and accumulate it for shabby things. While the former become high achievers, the latter become non achievers. Therefore, your focus should be on long-term goals based on your right values even in the case of money. If you hold right values and have commitment to these values, the short-term aberration being seen in the society will not deter you from pursuing your long-term goals.

MAKING VALUES STICK

In order to make your values to provide guidelines to your actions, you must make them stick. It is very easy to articulate values, but very difficult to make them stick. You may find numerous people in the society who pretend to hold values but never practise these in their daily life. Similar is the case with organisations which articulate values to be adhered to by all organisational members but these have absolutely no effect. With the result, such persons and organisations fail in their basic mission, that is, to become high achievers. Therefore, it is necessary for you to ensure that your values stick. For this purpose, you are required to do the following:

1. Identify your values.
2. Show commitment to your values.
3. Define behaviour relevant to your values.

Let us see how you can do all these.

Identify Your Values

The first thing that you are required, in order to make your values stick, is to identify these. If you want to become high achiever, your values must correspond to:

1. Your conscience,
2. Values of your model person,
3. Social relevance.

While framing your values, you should distinguish your values from ideals. This distinction is necessary because, by definition, ideals are perfect, as opposed to real that is imperfect; ideals are highest conception of anything conforming absolutely to theory. As against these ideals, your values are in the form of your normative conviction about a specific mode of conduct. Therefore, your values tend to move towards ideals but they are not ideals. In a perfect world, a person may wish to pursue many ideals but in the real world, not all of them can be pursued. Values are not those ideals; they are the absolute promises that a person makes which he lives by irrespective of the consequences. In the light of this, you must identify your values. In identifying your values, you may proceed in the following manner:

1. Push with relentness honesty to define what values are truly central. If you come with many, start this exercise again because chances are that you are confusing values which do not change with operational practices which are subject to change. For example, if you hold a view that you will pursue honesty irrespective of consequences, it is a part of your value system. But when you hold a view that you will be away from obscenity, it is your practice.
2. After you have drafted preliminary list of your values, ask the question about each of them: if the circumstances penalise me for holding a value, still

will I hold it? If your answer to this question in respect of a value is yes, it is a part of your value system. If the answer is no, it is not a part of your value system.

In this manner, you can identify your values and you will never compromise on these irrespective of consequences because these values are absolutely essential to your identity. If you mix your practices to be adopted with your values, it will create confusion in your mind. When you change your practices according to needs of the situation, you will unnecessarily curse yourself that you are compromising on your values which is not a reality.

Commit to Your Values

When you have identified your values, you must show commitment to these. Commitment to your values implies that you will never compromise on these in any situation. Commitment to values shows your loyalty to these. Loyalty is always absolute; it is not fractional. In fact, everyone is loyal to his own values and loyalty to others emerges because of these values. When you are loyal to your organisation, it implies that you are subscribing its values which are in consonance with your own values. You are loyal to your profession because its values match with your values. When both sets of values do not match, people leave the organisation or profession. In the same way, if someone is loyal to you, it is because your values match with his values. Loyalty with mismatch values is not a true loyalty; it is only opportunism which changes with circumstances.

Define Behaviour Relevant to Your Values

Values and behaviour go together because values shape behaviour. Therefore, it is necessary that you define yourself what kind of behaviour matches with each of your values. Only with this kind of definition, your values are translated into reality. Without such a translation, values

end up being simply impressive statements, rather than providing basis for principled conduct. For example, you hold a value of being respectful to people. For making this value operational, it is necessary that you define: what are some of the specific behaviours and actions that are relevant for this value? Unless you define such behaviours and actions, you may not be very clear to yourself whether you are working according to your values or not. Based on such a prescription, your values are translated into action. For example, if you have commitment to certain groups of people, it may be in the following forms:

1. Commitment to friends implies confidentiality.
2. Commitment to patients implies utmost care.
3. Commitment to customers implies good service.
4. Commitment to your organisation implies utmost efforts.
5. Commitment to society implies social responsibility.
6. Commitment to nation implies sacrifice.

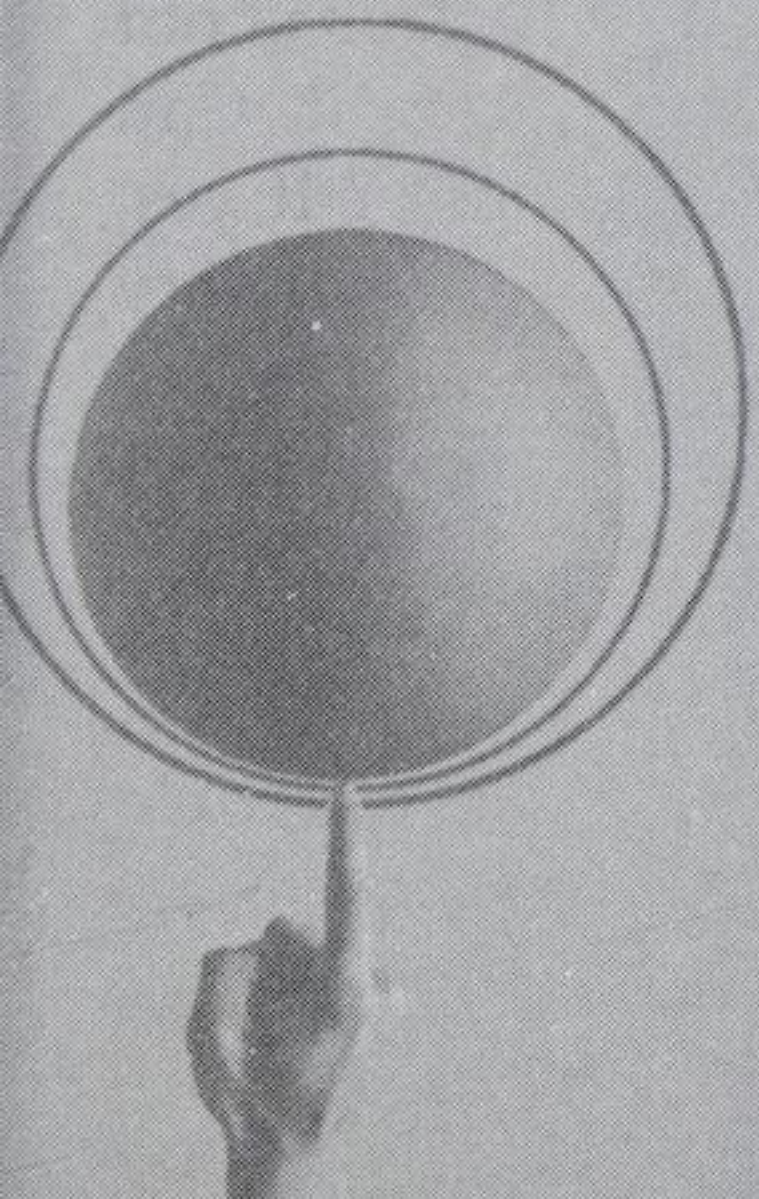
Like the above prescriptions, you may develop prescriptions for your other values too. Based on these prescriptions, you should monitor your behaviours and actions to ensure that these are in accordance with your values. While monitoring and evaluating your behaviours and actions, you must be honest to you. If you take a contradictory action, correct it immediately. You should not take a recourse that no one else has seen it. This is not true. You have seen it; your conscience has seen it. Can you hide any of your action from your conscience? If yes, your values are not real. If no, correct your contradictory action immediately.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

1. Identify your values that are central to you. Assess whether these values conform to:
   a. Your conscience.
   b. Your role model, if any.
   c. Betterment of your profession

2. Define behaviour relevant to each of your values. Find out the extent to which you deviated from such a behaviour and its reasons. Analyse how your conscience has reacted to such a deviation.

3. Resolve not to do anything which is against your conscience and commit to such a resolution in practice.



5

BE CREATIVE

Doing Things Differently

HIGH achievers either do different thing or do the same thing differently. In either case, the objective of a high achiever is to do better than others. Saying that you do the same thing differently is quite easy but is quite difficult to put it in practice. However, this paradox can be overcome if you become creative. You can become creative only when you are well conversant about creativity and various aspects related to it. Creativity is related to generation of new ideas or to conceive new perspectives on existing ideas. An idea is a notion, thought, or any product of intellectual action. Examples of creativity are: finding out a new method of working which is better than the old method, creating a new product which is better than the old product, creating a new system which better than the old system, and so on.

ROLE OF CREATIVITY IN HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

For doing the same thing differently, something new is required which must be better than the old one. This new thing emerges out of creativity. If you collect the examples of high achievers related to your field, you will find that all these achievers have tried something different which low achievers could not do. One skill that significantly differentiates high achievers from low achievers is creativity. Creativity is required because of the operation of law of equifinality. This law of equifinality is applicable to any type of work—business, sports and games, education, entertainment, social welfare, politics, and so on. The law of equifinality suggests that final outcome can be achieved by a variety of alternatives. However, all alternatives may not be equally effective. Some alternatives may be more time consuming, others less. Some alternatives may require more energy, others less. Some alternatives may be socially relevant, others may not be. The alternative which is socially relevant and requires less time and energy is the most desirable as it saves time and energy which can be used in another work. This way, a

person can achieve more by spending lesser time and energy. When this process is repeated for all types of work a person does, he stands to achieve more. Since various alternatives are generated by creative process, creativity helps in identifying these alternatives to choose from.

You will find numerous examples that show how creativity has helped in high achievement. A few examples are presented below:

1. Wright Brothers conceived an idea of flying in sky like birds in a machine. Initially, people laughed at this idea. But Wright Brothers continued with pursuing their idea and invented aeroplane. This initial idea has even led the people to go to another planet or to send their satellites on other planets. In fact, all scientific inventions originally start with ideas.

2. Frederick Taylow started his career as a worker in Midvale Steel Company, USA. He found that workers' productivity was quite low because of wrong methods of handling equipments. He conceived the idea of introducing a method that required lesser movement of a worker's body to reduce the time taken in completing a work. With his continuous efforts on this idea, he was able to increase the workers' productivity almost four times. Based on his ideas, Taylor gave the concept of scientific management.

Thus, creativity can generate new products which are more useful or new methods of working which are more effective. In the same way, creativity can change a system facing unique problems whether it is religious system or any other social system. In such a system, traditions develop over the period of time which affect the achievement of system's objectives adversely. With the result, the society suffers. In order to break these traditions, a change is required in the system. However, what change

should be brought in the system may not be quite clear initially. The nature of this change can be found out through creative process. Let us take some examples:

1. During first half of nineteenth century, majority of the Indian Hindu population was demoralised in the religious and spiritual sense as it was steeped in ignorance and religious superstitions. Dayanand Saraswati, born in a devout Brahmin family in Gujarat, wanted to seek solution of this problem by his imagination. He wandered from place to place and ultimately found the solution to overcome this problem. He founded Arya Samaj to eradicate the evils of Hindu traditionalism.

2. About two centuries back, Sati system was very common in India. According to the Sati system, a woman was required to burn herself along with the dead body of her husband irrespective of her age. In that period, child marriages were quite common. With the result, immatured deaths were also quite frequent. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was very much against the Sati system. By his imagination, he attacked this system in two ways—by convincing the people against this system and by convincing them against the child marriage. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was subsequently recognised as a great social reformer.

CREATIVE PROCESS

Creativity is a complex process although many creative people often report that ideas seem to come to them 'in a flash' without apparent reasons. Such a report is only partly true because these people usually remain busy in solving the problem subconsciously about which ideas come in flash. Therefore, it is more rational to treat creativity as a process consisting of the following stages:

1. Saturation.
2. Preparation.
3. Incubation.
4. Insight.
5. Verification.

Let us see what happens at each of these stages.

Saturation

Saturation is the first stage of creative process. You will notice that the most important way to get new ideas is to work on a baffling problem. You can work on a baffling problem in your field only when you are fully conversant with your field. Even the most energic and original mind must have attained more than ordinary mastery in his field in order to recognise or extend insight in any valuable way. In the game of cricket, a swing bowler can work on reverse swing only when he has mastery over swing bowling. In music, a musician can work on a new tune only when he has mastery over conventional tunes. In the same way, you can work for a new idea only when you are well conversant with your field.

A new idea is required to solve a specific problem or set of problems. A problem is a gap between what you want a thing to be and what the thing is. Therefore, you must become thoroughly familiar with the problem itself, its history, its importance, and its relationship with various aspects of work setting. This will provide you an insight in identifying the problem in true sense and you can think of an idea which is capable of solving the problem.

Preparation

Your knowledge, no matter how complete it is, does not generate new ideas. You have to go through preparation stage at which you try to collect information relating to your problem; you may recall your past experience and study new materials. You may deliberate with your friends

and colleagues. Deliberation usually involves analysis of the problem from all possible perspectives, building relationships and patterns about the problem, and seeking useful rearrangements or combinations.

At the preparation stage, you should recognise that something new does not come instantaneously or overnight. The preparation stage may last few minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, or even years. When the preparation stage lasts longer, you may tend to develop anxiety and frustration. In order to overcome these, you must know to manage your emotions. At this stage, the information must be mulled until what you call mental digestion takes place. It is possible that you generate a new idea at this stage. If it does not happen, you will be required to go through further stages.

Incubation

Incubation stage of creative process is just like putting eggs in an incubator for hatching. When hen's eggs are put in an incubator for twenty-one days and the temperature of the incubator is maintained at proper level, chicks come out of eggs. If you look at these eggs in the incubator, you will find that no change is taking place in the eggs. But the change is taking place inside the eggs which is not visible. On twenty-first day, you find that chicks have started coming out from the eggs. In the same way, in incubation stage of creativity, knowledge and ideas acquired during the preparation stage are put to mature and develop. At this stage, you may shelve your problem and forget about it. You may engage yourself in activities totally unrelated to the problem solution like listening to your favourite music, going for other means of entertainment, attending social activities, etc. However, you have shelved your problem consciously, but it exists in your subconscious mind. The difference between your conscious and subconscious mind is that conscious mind is the centre of logical thinking and you are aware about it while subconscious mind is unknown but engages

continuously in generation of ideas for a problem solution even though you may not be aware about this phenomenon. During the process of incubation, your mind will work subconsciously to generate new ideas after certain amount of sorting and manipulating the information stored there. Subconscious mind can be compared with a computer. In a computer, certain input is stored which may be needed at a later stage. When a problem is presented, the computer manipulates the stored input until the right combination is reached. This combination is quite different from any of the data stored as input in the computer. In the same way, a new combination is generated in your subconscious mind but with a difference. While in the computer, the combination of data is based on programming which is based on mathematical relationship, in the case of incubation in subconscious mind, there is less direct or determinable connection between the basic ideas and the new ideas. This happens because your subconscious mind stores data about all happenings in your life from the day you start thinking. This is the reason why you get certain new ideas through your dreams while you remain busy in sleeping consciously. Consider an example:

New Idea Through Incubation

David Morse, a research scientist at Corning Corporation, USA, was interested in a new line of cookware called Vision. These glass pots and pans had many advantages over traditional cookware, but no one at Corning succeeded in putting a nonstick surface on the glass. Looking for a solution to the problem, Morse put in many long days in the laboratory but he could not find out a solution. During his hours of rowing, the ideas and concepts developed in his mind that enabled him to devise a nonstick coating.

What a wonderful idea came in mind when actually the scientist was not consciously engaged in it.

Insight

The fourth stage of creative process is insight which is the act of seeing into or understanding things. At the insight stage, the scattered thoughts and ideas that were maturing during incubation stage come together to produce a breakthrough. Insight may occur suddenly or may develop slowly over time. Insight may be triggered by some external event, such as a new experience or an encounter with new data that forces you to think about the problem in new ways, or it can be completely internal event in which patterns of thoughts finally grow together in ways that generate new understanding. Take some examples how events triggered new ideas:

1. The great scientist, Newton saw an apple falling from the tree. He started thinking as to why the apple fell below and not went upward. This thinking subsequently led him to develop the principles of gravity.

2. When Archimedes entered his bath tub which was full of water, he saw that some water flew out of the tub. Based on this observation, he propounded the theory of displacement which is popularly known as Archimedes principles.

There are several such instances where the new ideas breed from environmental events. Everyone of us sees such events daily but pays attention to only those events which are relevant to us. Rest of the events are filtered out from our mind. Such events themselves are not ideas but they work as a source of generating new ideas.

Verification

Verification is the last stage of creative process. At the verification stage, the validity or truthfulness of the insight is determined. During this stage, your conscious mind sets about, by logical method or experimentation, to prove or

disprove the new idea generated. Usually, a check with cold reality reveals the need for adapting and refining the first conception of an idea. This stage is actually very critical because new ideas may be worthless until they come into full form and are available for consideration by those who use them.

When a new idea emerges, it is verified in a limited sphere because of the risk associated with putting a new idea into operation. If the idea is to bring an entirely new product, usually a prototype is prepared. With continuous refinements, this prototype is converted into operational product. Similarly, when the idea is related to new method of working to improve efficiency, it is applied to a limited area initially and required refinements are made. After such refinements, if the new method of working is found satisfactory, it is put into operation in wider area.

The above five stages of creative process are of general nature which are applicable to generate new ideas. However, in many cases of creativity, it is not necessary that all five stages are involved. For example, many new ideas may emerge at the stage of preparation itself without going through the other stages of incubation. Therefore, while applying these stages, you may be required to go to only those stages which are relevant for your creative process.

HOW TO BECOME CREATIVE

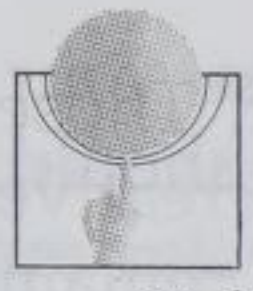
Biologically, everyone of us has enormous creative energy because of the power of our brain. In analogy to a computer, our brain is only of 1.3 Kgs. in weight but its memory storing capacity is 280 quintillion ($1{,}000{,}000^5$) bytes, many times more than any supercomputer has been conceived so far. Similarly, the brain has a processing capacity of 10^{16} (10 million billion) interconnections per second. This capacity is also many times more than a supercomputer. Alas, many times, we are not able to go as fast as any ordinary computer can go. This is because

we use only a small fraction of our brain's power. Those who are able to increase this small fraction become creative and those who decrease this small fraction further remain non-creative. Therefore, if you want to become creative, you have to use your brain a little more than what most of the people do. In order to use your brain more, you will need to become more open to new ideas. Being open to new ideas not only enhances your self-esteem but also pushes you for being creative. If you are resistant to change and develop a feeling that the method which you are following in doing your work is the only alternative, it will adversely affect your willingness to be creative. After all, creativity emerges because you are willing for that. This willingness emerges when you feel that whatever you are doing can be done in a better way by you yourself. With this kind of feeling, you can try the following ways to become creative:

1. Develop imagination.
2. Storm your brain.
3. Develop cognitive ability.

Develop Imagination

For being creative, you need to develop imagination. Imagination is the act of forming an image of any thing in your mind. It also includes thinking vainly or falsely. Imagination brings new ideas. These ideas may be fantastic and impracticable but never mind that because it enhances your power of thinking which ultimately makes you creative. Poets are very creative. That is why it has been said that where the rays of the sun do not find access, a poet reaches there through his imagination. Novelists' characters reached other planets much before the scientists thought of doing that. In any field of activity, all great persons have been individuals of imagination. Whether it is poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, etc., you will find the power of imagination. Take the example of Kalidas, the great Sanskrit poet who has created outstanding literature in Sanskrit:



Come Fool, Come

Kalidas was a state poet in the state of king Bhoj. One day, Bhoj went to his palace and entered the apartment of his queen where the queen was in conversation with her lady friend. Seeing Bhoj in her apartment, the queen took affront and told him, "Come fool, come." The king was perplexed at this strange welcome but kept silent. Next day, the king went to his court and began to address all ministers and courtiers, "Come fool, come." Everyone was surprised by this kind of welcome but did not say anything. When Kalidas entered, the king welcomed him by saying, "Come fool, come." Kalidas told the king in reply to such a welcome, "Oh king! I do not eat while going. I do not laugh while talking. I do not worry about what has already happened. I do not feel proud about what I have done. I do not interfere when two persons are conversing. Hence, what is the reason that you have called me a fool?" The king who was doubtful as to why his queen called him a fool when he entered her apartment, realised that it was uncivic on his part to intrude upon the privacy of two ladies. How imaginative the answer of Kalidas was.

Imagination differs from creativity in the sense that imagination is a kind of general thought-provoking action while creativity is oriented to a specific problem. Through your imaginary power, you can bring many more ideas, and it is possible that some of these ideas fit with your work. Imaginary power can be developed by continuous practice because it is not an in-born quality. Kalidas was considered as one of the foolest persons during his early years.

Storm Your Brain

In order to develop new ideas, you must storm your brain but this time, the storming of your brain should be related to your specific problem. In the process of storming your

brain, your imagination will remain confined to your specific problem. While storming your brain, you should proceed in the following manner:

1. Clearly state the problem for which new ideas are required so that you can focus on what you want to achieve by solving the problem. While stating the problem, do not specify any parameter within which the problem is to be solved because once you specify parameters, your ideas will be restricted to that extent.
2. Generate as much ideas as possible without bothering about their quality. Your emphasis at this stage must be on the quantity of ideas and not on their quality. It is more convenient to choose a good idea when many more ideas are available to choose from.
3. Defer idea evaluation at a later stage because it does not flow in the direction of idea generation. When you generate many ideas, this process can be taken up. If you mix up the idea evaluation and idea generation together, neither idea generation will flow smoothly nor idea evaluation will flow smoothly. Both will interfere with each other.
4. When you have generated your ideas in an exhaustive manner, you may go through the evaluation process. The evaluation of each idea should be done in the light of the parameters in which you want to get solution of the problem. Such parameters may be in the form of financial constraints, time constraints, people constraints, and so on. In the evaluation process, separate those ideas which meet these parameters from those which do not meet such parameters. If not a single idea meets all these parameters, leave the ideas into the incubation process. However, if the time factor for solving the problem is of paramount importance, choose an idea that meets the maximum parameters though not all.

Through the process of storming your brain, you generate more ideas. It is possible that not all these ideas are relevant at present but they may become relevant in future scenario because future scenario may be quite different from present scenario. Further, many ideas which are irrelevant in the present context may provoke you to overcome some of the constraints that you are facing at present. If you have ideas, you can mobilise resources to overcome your constraints.

Develop Cognitive Ability

Cognitive ability is quite helpful in becoming creative. Cognition is your thought, knowledge, interpretation, and understanding about yourself and your environment. Cognitive ability is your power to think intelligently and to analyse data effectively. Intelligence may be a precondition for creativity but alone, it is not sufficient for creativity. This is why most creative people are intelligent but all intelligent people are not creative. Creativity emerges because of your ability to think divergently and convergently. Your divergent thinking allows you to see differences between various situations, phenomena, or events. Your convergent thinking allows you to see similarities between various situations, phenomena, or events. You are required to develop both these types of thinking. Through this thinking, you will be able to see various situations, phenomena, or events in right perspective and derive meaningful conclusions. Thus, when you evaluate your ideas in solving any problem in your existing work, or in undertaking a new work, you become more objective.

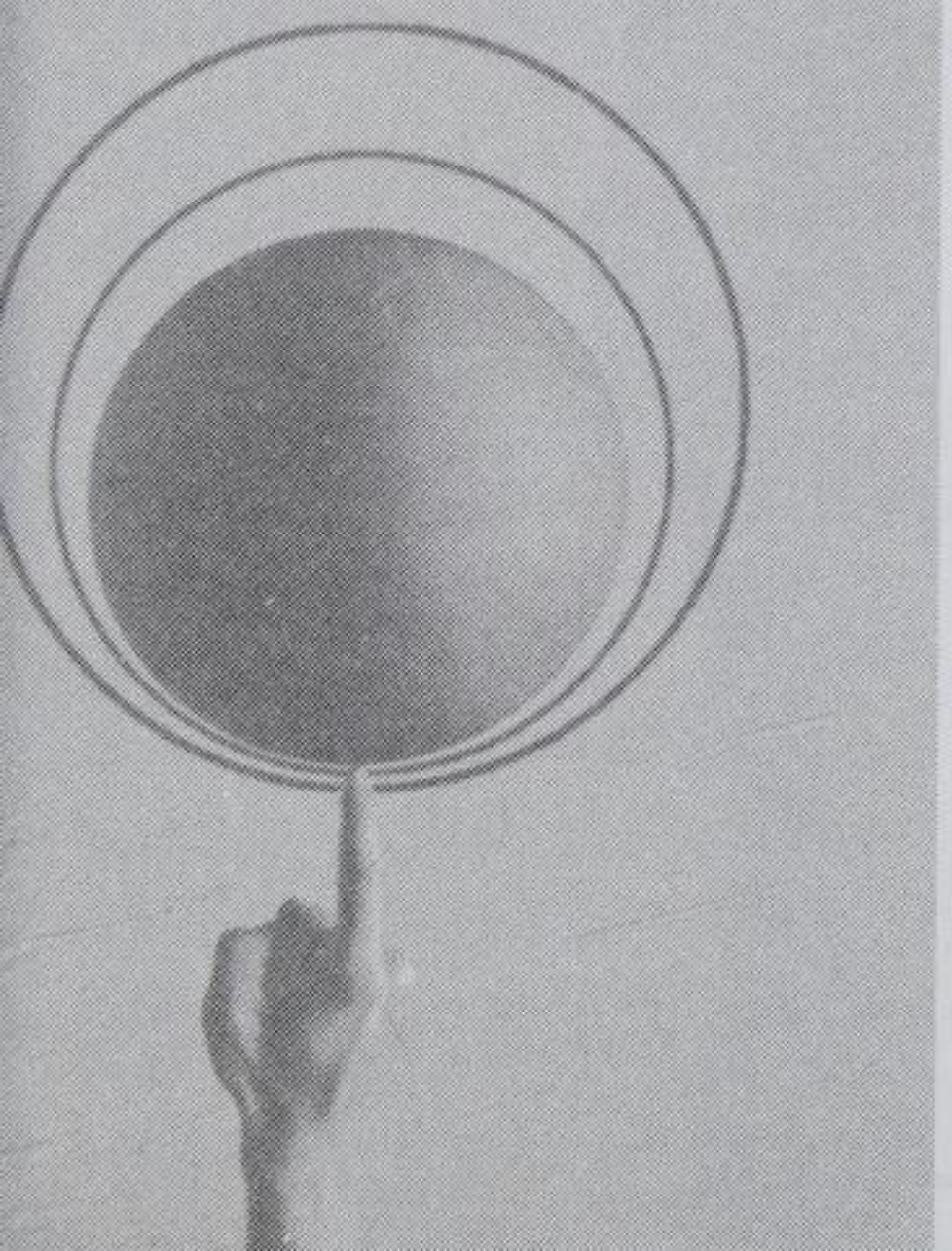
Your cognitive ability will help you to synthesise existing ideas to create new ideas. Synthesis is the process of combining separate elements of thought into a whole. It is a kind of reasoning from principles to a conclusion. Such a synthesis of the existing ideas helps to bring a new idea which may be innovative in some ways. For example,

radical innovation is a major breakthrough as a result of technological invention. System innovation creates a new functionality by using radical innovation. There are numerous such examples. Take one: automobile engine was invented primarily for four-wheelers. By synthesising this existing idea, the automobile engine was miniaturised to create different types of two-wheelers or lawn mowners. In fact, ideas for many of the modern weapons have been drawn from the ideas existed in mythological India. Today, there is a talk to create *Brahmastra,* a highly energy-producing weapon that destroys its target without any failure, existed during the age of *Mahabharat*. Thus, many ideas exist already. By synthesising these ideas, new ideas can be created.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

1. Assess your creative skill. If it is not in tune with your requirement of doing things differently, try to develop this. In order to develop your creative skill, try to do something in innovative way once a fortnight or month. Never mind even if the thing that you do is a small one.

2. If you feel that some of the work processes are inefficient either at your home or workplace, think how you can improve these. Go on thinking continuously till you find a solution. Still if you do not find the solution, stop thinking. It is quite possible that you get the solution after some time.



6

MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS

Keeping Emotions in Right Proportion

HIGH achievers control their emotions while low achievers are controlled by their emotions. Therefore, if you are striving to become high achiever, you must manage your emotions effectively so that you are not dictated by these emotions. Emotion refers to a feeling with its distinctive thoughts, psychological states, and ranges of propensities to act. There are hundreds of emotions with their blends. Some of the more common emotions and their blends that affect human behaviour are:

1. *Enjoyment*: happiness, joy, relief, bliss, delight, sensual pleasure, gratification, satisfaction, ecstasy, euphoria and, at the extreme end, mania.
2. *Love*: acceptance, friendliness, trust, kindness, affinity, devotion, adoration and infatuation.
3. *Anger*: fury, outrage, resentment, wrath, indignation, acrimony, annoyance, hostility and, at the extreme, pathological hatred and violence.
4. *Fear*: anxiety, apprehension, nervousness, concern, misgiving, dread, fright, wariness, terror, phobia and panic.
5. *Sadness*: grief, sorrow, cheerlessness, gloom, self-pity, dejection, despair and depression.
6. *Disgust*: contempt, disdain, scorn, aversion, distaste and revulsion.
7. *Shame*: guilt, embarrassment, chagrin, remorse, humiliation, regret and mortification.
8. *Surprise*: shock, astonishment, amazement and wonder.

What is common with all such emotions is that these are found in all types of people universally and affect their behaviour. When these emotions are at the optimum level, they affect behaviour positively. When they cross the optimum level, they affect behaviour negatively. Management of emotions involves keeping them at optimum level. This is true for managing both positive emotions like enjoyment, love, and their different forms as

well as negative emotions like anger, fear, sadness, disgust, shame, surprise and their blends. The only difference is that optimum level of both differs. In the case of positive emotions, it may be at higher side while in the case of negative emotions, it should be at lower side. Keeping positive emotions to optimum level is as important as keeping negative emotions. If you are over-enjoyed, you may make a wrong decision just as you may make a wrong decision when you are angry.

For managing emotions to keep them at optimum level, a new type of intelligence has been recognised which is known as *emotional intelligence* and is measured in terms of emotional quotient (EQ) just as intelligence is measured in terms of intelligence quotient (IQ). Emotional intelligence involves knowing what feels good, what feels bad, and getting from bad to good. It involves emotional awareness and emotional management skills which enable you to balance emotion and reason so as to maximise your long-term happiness. In today's context, emotional intelligence has become very important in doing something meaningful because of various types of environmental pressures and other factors that may tend to disturb you emotionally. Therefore, it is worthwhile to see how emotional intelligence contributes in becoming high achiever.

ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

According to Daniel Goleman, one of the proponents of emotional intelligence, intelligence quotient (IQ) accounts for only 20 per cent of a person's success in life while the balance can be attributed to emotional intelligence or EQ. Though it may show a little bit exaggeration, no one can deny the role that emotional intelligence plays in one's success. For example, Peter Drucker, one of the most renowned management consultants in the world, argues that "knowledge workers are intellectually arrogant which leads to disabling ignorance. Poor performance is the result

of simply not knowing enough and being contemptuous of knowledge outside your own speciality. First rate engineers tend to take pride in not knowing about people and think that human beings are much too disorderly for the good engineering mind." When I was going through these sentences of Peter Drucker, I recalled an event that took place around 1980. The event is as under:

The Emotional Technical Director

When I was with Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, I used to visit local industries as a part of extension activities. In one of such visits along with my colleague, I was sitting in the chairman's office of a company. The company was engaged in manufacturing synthetic yarns for knitting. The quality of these yarns depended very much on the proportion of different types of fibres blended. While we were discussing management problems of local industries, the technical director entered the room with his angry face but without knocking the door. Without caring that visitors were sitting there, the director addressed the chairman and told, "Mr. chairman, the guys to whom you have appointed as technical trainees are worthless. They do not understand anything which I say. In fact, they do not want to understand anything." Without waiting for the chairman's reaction, the technical director left the room. I along with my colleague was taken by surprise on this event and asked the chairman, "Who is he and how do you manage such a person?" The chairman said little smilingly, "He is our technical director. He is quite moody but quite knowledgeable person in his field. When he is in proper mood, he produces very fine ideas for blending different types of fibres." Later on, we enquired from some of the employees of the company about the behaviour of the technical director without narrating this event. Every employee agreed with the technical competence of the technical director but no one was appreciative of his mood.

Emotional intelligence enables you to overcome this type of mood problem and, thereby, enhances your performance. In particular, emotional intelligence helps you in the following ways:

1. More rational decision making.
2. More effective communication.
3. Conflict resolution.
4. Enhancing acceptability.

Let us see how emotional intelligence contributes in the above aspects.

More Rational Decision Making

You might have experienced that when you are in the grip of any of emotions, you tend to make wrong decisions while such thing may not happen when you are not under the grip of such an emotion. This happens because your emotions prevail over your rationality. Decision making is a process through which you choose an alternative out of the several. In order to be a decision rational, it must be able to achieve the objective for which it has been made. In order to ensure this phenomenon, you are required to identify various alternatives and evaluate these alternatives objectively so that the correct alternative is chosen. The word objectively is very important in the process of decision making. If you go through the process of alternative evaluation without involving your emotions, you tend to do it objectively. If you involve your emotions in this process, you tend to do it subjectively. When subjective factors enter the decision making process, the decision arrived at tends to become irrational and ineffective. If such a decision has long-term implications, consider the cost that such a decision involves.

In the process of becoming high achiever, you have to make decisions after decisions. If you are oriented to make rational decisions, the process of becoming high achiever will be relatively easier. If you are oriented to make

emotional decisions, the reverse is also true. In fact, many of the business organisations which were almost leaders in their respective fields have become extinct today simply because of the emotional decisions. How many persons can today recall the names of companies like Martin Burn, Jessops, Andrews, Orkay, Metal Box? Once, all these companies were leaders in their fields. Alas! the emotional decisions by their chief executives have made them non-existent. This is not happening only in business field; this is happening in every field, even in family affairs. You can easily recall the names of ministers, princes and other prominent persons in their fields who ruined themselves because of their emotions. Therefore, do not let your emotions to decide on your behalf. This may make you to decide in haste but to repent in leisure.

More Effective Communication

Emotional intelligence leads to more effective communication. What you say may be important but how you say it is even more important. Effective communication involves both what and how. Communication is the process by which two or more persons exchange their messages—ideas or information. To be effective, the communication process should be such that the receiver interprets the message in the same way as intended by the sender. When this does not happen, the communication does not achieve its objective though its process is complete. When both sender and receiver are free from their emotions at the time of communication, communication becomes effective. When any one of them is under the grip of his emotions, the communication is likely to be distorted.

First, take the case of message sender. While communicating, you may use words—spoken or written, pictures and graphs, and body language. Very often, spoken words and body language are associated. Body language is in the form of expression that comes at face

and movement of different parts of the body. The body language reinforces the spoken words and your emotions affect your body language. Different emotions cause different types of changes in facial expression, vocal expression, and postural expression. Generally, when you are angry, your face turns red, your voice becomes louder and your posture becomes less relaxed. All these communicate negative meaning of what you say. Therefore, you need to control your emotions to match your body language with your words.

Take the case of message receiver. As a message receiver, you tend to interpret the message according to your mood which is caused by your emotions. When you are in the grip of your emotions, you tend to attach a different meaning to a message as compared to when you are not in such grip. For example, when you are not in good mood, you may treat a good piece of advice from your friend or colleague as your criticism. This misinterpreted communication often becomes the source of interpersonal conflict.

Conflict Resolution

Emotional intelligence helps you in conflict resolution. You may face different types of conflict both at work as well as outside it. Conflict is any situation in which two or more persons feel themselves in opposition. It arises from disagreement over the goals to be achieved or the methods to achieve those goals. Conflict upto a certain level is desirable as it provokes competition among the persons involved and they become more creative to find out new ideas to face the competition. But beyond this level, conflict becomes negative and consumes high energy of the persons involved in the conflict. It is this type of conflict that needs amicable resolution.

You may face conflict of different types—within yourself, between you and other persons, and between other persons which affect you. Conflict within you may

take place in the form of goal conflict or role conflict. You face goal conflict when you are in a position to choose only one goal out of two equally attractive goals or two equally unattractive goals. Since you can choose only one goal, the conflict arises in your mind as to which goal you should choose. For example, you are promoted by your organisation but this is attached with a transfer to another place. You like present place of your working very much. Therefore, there may be a conflict in your mind whether to go for the promotion with change in place of working or to remain at the present place of working without promotion. Role conflict arises in you if you are performing two roles simultaneously but the requirement of each role is quite opposite. For example, you are the chairman of a selection committee and your nearest relative is a candidate. Here, you may experience a conflict whether you should help your relative in getting him selected or you should follow the rules of selection strictly without caring whether your relative is selected or not.

Conflict may take place between you and other persons. These other persons may be your family members, your neighbours, your acquaintances, etc., in the case of social relationships. These other persons may be your superior, your subordinates, and other functionaries in organisational relationships. Each of these parties has specific expectations from you in the same way as you have expectations from them. When both these sets of expectations do not match, a conflicting situation arises.

Besides the conflicts in which you may be a party, there are conflicts among other persons that affect you adversely even though you are not a party to such a conflict. Consider what happens when parents fight among themselves, two neighbours fight among themselves, your subordinates fight among themselves, and so on.

If you analyse the basic nature of all types of conflict, you may find that emotional factors are involved in all these. Based on their emotions, the parties involved in a

conflict may perceive about incompatibility of goals or methods to achieve these goals. This perception may not be true as this has been caused by their emotions. If their emotions can be brought to a desired level, they will perceive the situation more objectively. Emotional intelligence, here, has a significant role to play. Through your emotional intelligence, you can educate the persons concerned to bring the real issues of the conflict on surface. When they bring real issues to surface, they find that all these issues are meaningless. You might have observed that when children of a housing society play together, they start abusing and fighting among themselves even on minor issues. Such an episode leads their parents to come out in order to rescue their children. Without taking cognizance as to what really happened among the children, they start fighting themselves while the concerned children forget their issues of fighting and start playing together. All these happen because of emotions. There is a story which shows how emotions create problems to others and how these can be solved.

My Accountant is Fool

An employee of a government department fell sick and was hospitalised. After his sickness was over, he resumed his duty. He was entitled for medical expense reimbursement. Meanwhile, he was transferred to another place and he could not claim the reimbursement at the place where he fell sick. Subsequently, he claimed reimbursement at his new place of posting. The accountant put an objection that since the employee fell sick at his previous place of posting, he would get reimbursement from that place only. His file of reimbursement was sent to the previous place where the accountant put an objection that since the employee was transferred to another place, he would get reimbursement from his new place of posting. The matter did not end here and it invited more objections and counter

objections from the two accountants. With these objections and counter objections, the file got thicker and thicker and both the accountants made it a prestige issue that the payment would not be made from their place. Perturbed by the undue delay in getting reimbursement, the employee approached his head of department. The head of department looked into the file and sent a letter along with the file to his counterpart posted at the place where the employee fell sick. The reimbursement payment came from the old place to new place within a week. The accountant of the new place was surprised on this and enquired from the head of department about the contents of the letter written to the counterpart. The head of department gave the copy of the letter to the accountant to read it himself. The letter contained, "My accountant is fool, what about your accountant?" How the simple application of emotional intelligence broke the deadlock.

Enhancing Acceptability

Emotional intelligence enhances your acceptability in the family, friendship group, society, and work organisation. If you have emotional intelligence, people will love you and accept you by their heart irrespective of your position. Without emotional intelligence, people may accept you because of your position but this acceptance does not come out of their heart. Social acceptance is necessary to satisfy your social need. Social need emerges because you are a part of the social group irrespective of the nature of this group—constituted for official relationship or without such relationship. You feel comfortable if other members of the group accept you. In the case of their non-acceptance, you feel uncomfortable which is frustrating for you.

People in the society accept those persons by their heart who show consistency in behaviour over the period of time. Consistency in behaviour emerges from your emotional intelligence. With the result, your behaviour matches with the people's expectations that they have

about your likely behaviour. Without emotional intelligence, you are likely to show unpredictable behaviour which may become irritating for those with whom you interact. No one likes irritating behaviour; not even the family members whose responsibility you have shouldered. If this kind of behaviour is not acceptable to your family members, how do you expect that your such behaviour is acceptable to your friends and colleagues? Therefore, there is a need to show positive behaviour consistently by applying your emotional intelligence.

EMOTIONAL WINNERS AND LOOSERS

Can there be emotional winners and losers? Yes, but this is not as apparent as you wish. In a game of win-loose, winner and loser are apparent. Where the psychological feelings are involved, winners and loosers can be identified through their behaviour. An emotional winner is one who manages his emotions in such a way that these emotions contribute positively in achieving his goals. On the other hand, an emotional looser is one who is dictated by his emotions and does not channelise these into meaningful energy. Emotional winners identify their emotions and turn them into positive. For them, each of their emotions has some positive reasons:

Excitement—because it stimulates activity.

Curiosity—because it probes new ideas.

Compassion—because it permits human relationships.

Interest—because it helps in progress.

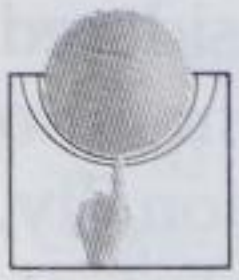
Fear—because it alerts.

Guilt—because it refrains from doing wrong.

In general, some of these emotions may be considered as negative. But emotional winners convert them into positive and use them for doing better. Additionally, emotional winners know when what emotions are relevant. They know:

A time to be angry and a time to be pleasant.
A time to be aggressive and a time to be passive.
A time to fight and a time to love.
A time to be together and a time to be alone.
A time to cry and a time to laugh.
A time to confront and a time to withdraw.
A time to hurry and a time to wait.
A time to speak and a time to be silent.
A time to work and a time to play.
A time to enjoy and a time to pause.

Emotional losers, on the other hand, always look into their past. They remain busy in counting their past successes, if there is any. If there is none, they remain busy in counting the successes of their parents or even ancestors. They believe in the proverb, 'My forefather has eaten ghee, smell my hands.' Instead of taking lessons from their past miseries, they often curse themselves that, "If I had done this or that; if I had married someone else; if I had chosen that field; if I had been born rich; and so on." Such a thinking may give them some solace for the time being, but this complicates their matter further. They are not ready to understand that the past miseries cannot be undone, only their negative effects can be undone provided a right approach is adopted. But for adopting a right approach, the emotional loosers have to transform themselves into emotional winners by managing their emotions effectively. Even if emotional loosers do not live in their past, many of them boast some of their qualities disproportionately which makes the things worse. Consider the following example given by Daniel Goleman:



One-dimensional COO

The chief executive officer (CEO) fired the chief operating officer (COO) of a company, one of the ten large companies

in the information technology field in the USA. When the CEO was questioned about the rationale of this decision, he told, "The COO was extraordinarily talented, brilliant conceptually, a very powerful mind. He was great on the computer, knew the numbers up, down and backward. That is how he got to be COO. But he was not a brilliant leader, not even particularly likeable. He was often brutal in his responses. In groups, he was socially awkward; he had no social graces, or even social life. At 45, he had nobody he was close to, no friends. He worked all the time. He was one-dimensional. That is why I finally let him go."

What does this example show? In majority of cases, a COO is groomed by the CEO to take his place in future. But here in this case, the reverse has happened because the COO had very high IQ but very low EQ. On the IQ front, he was a winner but on the EQ front, he was a loser. In the end, he lost his job too. You can identify several such emotional losers.

HOW TO BECOME EMOTIONAL WINNER

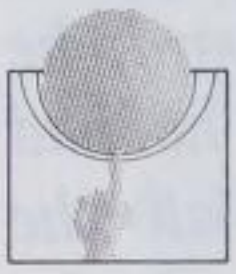
In order to become emotional winner, you have to manage your emotions in such a way that these remain at the optimum level so that these do not interfere with your work unnecessarily. Emotions are part of everyone's personality because without emotions, human beings will be just like animals. But you can become a better human being only when you manage these emotions effectively. In order to proceed in the right direction, you must practise the following:

1. Recognise your emotions.
2. Develop emotional competence.
3. Deal with emotional upsets effectively.

Let us see how you can practise all these.

Recognise Your Emotions

The first step in becoming an emotional winner is to recognise your emotions. Often, people fail to develop emotional maturity because they are not able to recognise their emotions properly and the way these emotions work against their effectiveness. Take the following example:



No One Cares for Me

A person was working in a company at a relatively high position. He had a high profile career, was smart, conscientious, and well-organised. However, he was not popular among his colleagues. The person developed a feeling that he cared for everyone but no one cared for him. Each time a function used to be organised, he was not an invitee. No one liked to take lunch with him during lunch period. On each of such occasions, the person used to feel let down by his colleagues and he used to reinforce his feeling that he cared for everyone but no one cared for him. The fact was that he used to become irritated and angry even on the small matter. Many of his colleagues used to comment, "He does not know when he gets angry. It is only after he has released his pent-up feelings that he realises he was angry."

You will find many such persons around you who are not ready to accept that their emotions are hurting themselves and others. They are aware about their intellectual abilities but are ignorant about their emotions. Even if they are aware about their emotions, they do not want to accept these, particularly the negative ones, in order to protect their ego. For example, some people develop fear about certain objects or events but consciously, they do not accept it because they feel that it will turn them fearful from being brave. With the result, in order to protect their ego falsely, they remain fearful from some objects and the number of such objects goes on

increasing. Therefore, you need to recognise and identify your emotions. If you are able to recognise your emotions fully, you can manage them effectively. In order to recognise your emotions properly, you can proceed in the following manner:

1. List all the emotions that have relevance for your work and your personal life. Some jobs like those of psychiatrist, social worker, manager, teacher, police officer, administrative officer, manager, salesperson, etc., require high emotional intelligence while other jobs like those of botanist, biochemist, chef, billing clerk, systems analyst, etc., require comparatively low emotional intelligence. According to your job, find out such emotions. In the same way, emotional intelligence requirement differs with lifestyle. If you are member of a large family, attend many social functions and have large friendship group, you need high emotional intelligence as compared to those who have opposite lifestyle.
2. After identifying relevant emotions based on your past experience, count how you reacted to the situations that had emotional content and how your reaction affected you and others. In fact, the so-called negative emotions are not negative in absolute form; it is only their untimeliness or high degree that is negative. For example, if you are angry modestly when it is needed is not bad but if you are angry when it is not needed is bad. Similarly, when you are angry out of proportion, it is bad. This way, you can find out which emotions are positive and which emotions are negative for you.
3. You can seek the help of your family members and close friends in recognising your emotions. Often, there is a part of your personality which is not known to you but is known to others. Your family members and close friends are aware about this part of personality. Do not feel shy or bring your ego

unnecessarily in discussing your emotions with your family members and close friends. After all, they are your well-wishers. After setting proper environment for discussion, your simple question to them, "What are my emotions that hurt you"? will do the work. But be sure: if you are putting this question with your open mind, you can expect the same from them to whom you are putting the question.

4. Based on the above steps, list out the emotions which require your attention to be regulated and controlled. Put these emotions in priority by taking the ease with which a particular emotion can be controlled as a basis. The emotions that require longer time to control may be put later. This will faciliate you in bringing all the emotions at the optimum level.

Develop Emotional Competence

When you are fully aware about your emotions, you are in a better position to develop emotional competence. Competence of a person in his field is his overall fitness in the field. Thus, emotional competence denotes the overall fitness of a person in emotional matters. Since there are various types of emotions, various emotional competencies are required. These emotional competencies vary along with jobs. However, there are some emotional competencies which are required by every person. These are emotional awareness, self-confidence, self-control, and empathy. These are the core emotional competencies on which other emotional competencies are built. For example, emotional awareness helps you to learn how to minimise the impact of negative emotions like anger, fear, shame, sadness, etc. Similarly, this also helps you to enhance the degree of positive emotions like enjoyment, love, etc., if these are not upto required level. Developing emotional competence involves a change process through which you have to go. This process has three steps:

1. unfreezing,
2. changing, and
3. refreezing.

Unfreezing

At the unfreezing stage of developing emotional competence, you have to be willing to change your emotions. Without such a willingness, it is not fruitful to go through other steps. However, if you have burning desire of being a high achiever and you have confidence in you, you can develop this willingness easily because you will never like that your emotions adversely affect your goal-achieving efforts. When you are willing to change your emotions to make them more positive, take that emotion first which is easily changeable. When you complete the process of change in respect to this emotion, you can take your other emotions turn-by-turn. Through this way, developing emotional competence will be easier for you. If you take all emotions to change at a time, it may create problem for you because changing different emotions requires different types of efforts.

Changing

Changing emotions is the real process of developing emotional competence. In the changing stage, you try to develop positive emotions as well as to get rid of negative emotions. For this purpose, you may use three strategies simultaneously:

1. Use auto-suggestion.
2. Manage stimuli.
3. Practise new behaviour and get feedback.

Use Auto-suggestion. An auto-suggestion is a set of self-prepared statements showing what type of person you want to be. This can be applied in the case of developing emotional competence. If you wish to apply this strategy for developing emotional competence, you must prepare

such statements which reinforce your positive behaviour. While preparing such statements, you should take care that these statements show what behaviour you want to follow and why you want to follow that. Further, each of these statements should show a kind of conviction and not merely shows the directive principle. For example, you should frame a statement like 'I must do ..... because it ....., instead of the statement like I should do ..... because it ..... When you use the word must instead of should, it shows your conviction and your conscious mind sends signal to your subconscious mind. Your subconscious mind treats this signal as a command and not merely as a directive principle. Any thing that goes in your subconscious mind cannot be erased easily. In the case of emotional behaviour, some of the statements that may be relevant to you are as follows:

- I must not be angry because it hurts the feelings of others.
- I must not be fearful because it develops cowardliness.
- I must not develop depression because it works against my self-esteem.
- I must remain happy because it gives me psychic energy.
- I must love others because that is gratifying to them.

These are only few examples. Based on your emotions, you may develop relevant statements for you. Such statements must be for both—overcoming negative emotions and reinforcing positive emotions. While preparing such statements, ensure that you are well-composed and free from any disturbing element. You can prepare such statements in your conscious mind. If need be, write these statements on a piece of paper and read this paper every morning before you start your day's work. If you have prepared these statements in your mind,

remind yourself about these statements in the early morning.

Manage Stimuli. You learn everything from stimuli which are in the form of persons, objects, and events in the environment with which you interact. There is a tendency of people to behave in response to the stimuli. This is true for emotions too. If you interact with an irritating person, the chance is high that you may become irritated too. If you interact with a happy person, the chance is that you may become happy. Similar statements are true in the case of objects and events. Managing stimuli involves gradual removal of those stimuli that lead to development of negative emotions and replacing these with the stimuli that lead to development of positive emotions. If it is not possible to remove the negative stimuli altogether, you can rearrange these stimuli in such a way that these do not interfere with your early day's work. You can start this exercise from your home itself because home environment is very effective in developing positive or negative emotions. If the home environment is positive, you develop positive emotions. If it is negative, you develop negative emotions. Such emotions may be carried out by you at your workplace too. Similarly, if there are some objects like photographs, show-pieces, etc. which create negative emotions, replace these. For example, if you have photographs showing fighting, the chance is that you develop fighting mood. Similarly, if you have photographs showing love and affection, the chance is that you develop pleasant mood.

Along with this exercise at home, you take up this exercise at your workplace too. Remove all the negative things away from you. If that is not possible to the fullest extent as you wish, you rearrange them in such a manner that you interact with them the least. For example, a senior marketing manager of a company entrusted the work of dealing with irritating customers to his other staff members

as he felt that he used to lose his temper while dealing with such customers.

Practise New Behaviour and Get Feedback. When you have prepared statements about developing positive emotions and overcoming negative emotions and have managed the stimuli properly, you must mould your behaviour according to your statements. This is a slow and time-consuming process because you cannot change your emotions in a single day; it requires continuous practice for much longer days. The number of days required depends on your commitment to unlearn negative emotions and develop positive emotions, the efforts that you put, and the strength of an emotion that you want to get rid of. However, if you are committed and put proper efforts, the result will be positive.

While engaged in developing positive emotions and overcoming negative emotions, you must measure your behaviour regularly. This will give you feedback about your progress that you have made in this context. If the feedback shows that you are progressing in right direction, it will instil confidence in you; continue this practice. If the feedback shows that you are not progressing in right direction, evaluate your efforts and find out where you fall short. This will help you to reorient your efforts. With continuous practice, you develop new ways of emotional thinking which are desirable.

Refreezing

Refreezing is the last step in developing emotional competence. Refreezing is the process of making new behaviour relatively permanent and resistant to further change. When a new behaviour becomes part of your behavioural repertory, you behave accordingly. Refreezing is necessary because without it, the old ways of emotional thinking might soon reassert themselves while the new ways of thinking are forgotten.

Deal with Emotional Upsets Effectively

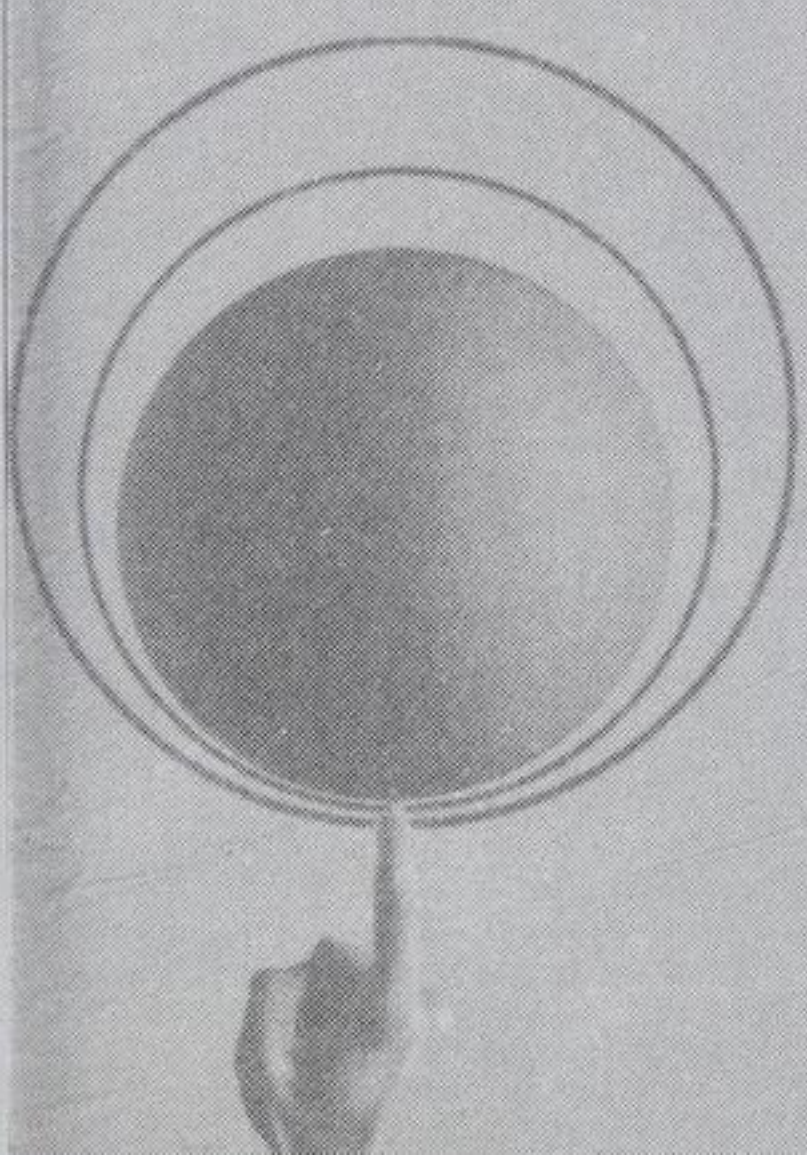
With your emotional competence, you may deal with emotional upsets effectively. An emotional upset is a situation that hurts you emotionally. With the result, you tend to show emotionally-immatured behaviour. There may be several situations in your life in which your efforts and consequent results do not match. This may happen in reality or it may just be your own perception which might be wrong. In either case, this hurts your feeling. While your emotionally-immatured behaviour may help you to overcome this feeling in the immediate short-term, it hurts you in the long-term. On the other hand, emotionally-matured behaviour may not be gratifying in the short-term but it is gratifying in the long-term. Take the following example:

Promotion Refused

In a company, two executives were refused promotion because of negative evaluation by their superior. It was setback for both. The first executive reacted to the setback with rage and even imagined about killing his superior. He started complaining to everyone, "The boss has spoiled my life. It seems that my career is over." He went on a drinking binge. He avoided his boss, lowering down his head every time they crossed each other in the hall. This kind of behaviour subsequently lowered down his morale further. The second executive took this upset differently and started thinking about what hud gone wrong. He discussed the matter with his wife in the evening. Both resolved that he should talk to his boss about where he was lacking. In discussion with his boss, he was able to know his weaknesses in the light of the requirements of the next higher position. He tried to overcome these weaknesses and got promotion subsequently.

There are several such examples which take place in most of the organisations. You must realise that doing quite well in your present position does not mean that you are fit for the next position too. In fact, the requirements of two positions in the same hierarchy are quite different. That is why in the case of promotion, while evaluating the suitability of persons, more emphasis is placed on potential rather than on present performance. Therefore, if you analyse the basic reasons of situations causing emotional upsets rationally, you will find that these reasons are more justified than what you believe at the first instance. The need is not to react emotionally with emotional upsets but to act rationally. When you develop emotional competence, you will see the things in right perspective, which will enable you to treat the situations as normal which might be causing emotional upsets in others.

YOUR ACTION PLAN



1. Identify your emotions that affect your work adversely at your home, workplace, and social affairs. Analyse the situations in which such emotions tend to arise. Also analyse the extent to which you can have control over such situations.
2. Prepare an auto-suggestion containing statements about your those emotions which cause upset. While preparing these statements, write what you must do to control your emotions and why you must do these. Read these statements every morning till these are fully ingrained in your mind.
3. In the evening, evaluate your behaviour in the light of these statements. If you find any deviation, take action to overcome this deviation immediately. Continue this practice till you manage your emotions in right proportion.

7

SET YOUR VISION AND GOALS

Converting Dream into Reality

IF you want to become a high achiever, the first question that comes to your mind is: what do you want to achieve and why do you want to achieve that? If you answer this question rightly, another question that will emerge in your mind is: when do you want to achieve that? These three Ws—what, why, and when indicate your vision and goals which energise you to put your maximum efforts continuously. These maximum efforts, in turn, make you a high achiever. Therefore, you must be very clear about your vision and goals. If you do not have clarity in these, your efforts will be directionless. Any object which is directionless never reaches its ultimate target.

VISION

First, let us talk about vision. The technical concept of vision is the mental perception of the kind of environment a person aspires to create within a broad time horizon and the underlying conditions for the actualisation of this perception. In an operational way, your vision is your future aspiration that leads to an inspiration to be the best in your field of activity. Your vision is a dream that you want to convert into reality. Your vision implies what projection you have made about yourself, where you will go in the future, and what challenges lie ahead in the process of reaching there. When you have clear vision, it helps you in the following manner:

1. Your vision is inspiring and exhilarating to you.
2. Your vision fosters long-term thinking.
3. Your vision fosters risk-taking and experimentation.
4. Your vision represents your integrity.

If you take the examples of various high achievers in your field or other fields, you will find that they had or have clear vision about themselves and the circumstances in which they had or have to work.

Process of Envisioning

Envisioning is the act through which you develop your vision. Your vision consists of two major components—core ideology and envisioned future. Your core ideology defines your enduring portrait that remains unchangeable as it passes through time. For example, when you say that "I want to become number one in my field of activity", being number one remains unchangeable irrespective of the field you choose; it does not change with the field. Your envisioned future consists of your long-term purpose, may be for 10 years, 20 years, 30 years or even more and a vivid description of what it will be like to achieve this purpose. Purpose defines the field of activity that you choose based on your potential and the environment in which you have to work. For example, when you say that "I want to become number one cricketer in the country", it defines your field of activity. The envisioned future defines the futurity of your vision and consequent action. In this context, an oriental saying is as follows:

Where the vision is one year, cultivate flowers.
Where the vision is ten years, cultivate trees.
Where the vision is eternity, cultivate people.

By combining your core ideology and envisioned future, you can develop your vision. However, this process may not be simple when you are not clear about any one of these two elements.

A question that is important in developing vision is: at what age of life, should or does a person develop vision? While core ideology in the form of 'doing better than others' may develop even at early childhood, envisioned future may develop much later. In fact, one's core ideology is an internal factor to him and may develop even at much early stage of the life in the form of one's dream that is to be converted into reality. Envisioned future is external to a person and depends on the environmental variables.

Therefore, it is developed much later. Here, two contrasting examples are presented:

1. Wilma Rudolph, almost a paralytic girl during her early childhood, used to lie on the bed. She wanted to do something exceptional but her doctor advised that she could not even walk. Wilma was impatient for doing something. Encouraged by her mother that she could do whatever she wanted, she told, "I want to be the fastest woman on the track on this earth." This happened at the age of seven. Ultimately, she won three gold medals in 1960 olympics—100 metre race, 200 metre race, and 400 metre relay race.

2. Dhirubhai Ambani, who became number one industrialist in India, started his trading business in 1959 at the age of 26. At the age of 37, he expressed the desire of being number one industrialist of the country. He achieved this vision in 1990s much before his death in July 2002.

Thus, vision can be developed at any time of life but the ideology of doing better than others can be developed at an early stage of life. Those who have a dream at early stage of life, have ample time to convert their dream into reality. After all, what is reality today was a dream in the past. What is a dream today will become reality in the future. But the more important thing is that you must have a dream which you can convert into reality. When you have such a dream, you can find ways for converting this into reality. However, your dream should not be a mere wishful thinking; it must be backed by your conviction. Some persons have dreams in the form of building castles in air; such dreams are not their convictions but merely their wishful thinking which can never be converted into reality.

GOALS

Goals are desired outcomes that are scheduled for achievement during a specified period. This period may

be long-term, say five years or so or short-term, say one year or less. Your long-term goals are derived from your vision in the same way as short-term goals are derived from long-term goals. Both these long-term and short-term goals contribute to realisation of your vision though in different way. Short-term goals contribute to the realisation of long-term goals which, in turn, contribute to the realisation of your vision.

Role of Goals

Setting of goals specifically is necessary for you as these determine the direction in which you should make your efforts. Efforts have no use unless these are made in right direction. When you have clearly-specified goals, you will be able to focus your attention on these only as Arjun of Mahabharat did while taking aim on the bird's eye. Those persons who do not specify their goals clearly, they wonder as to which way they should go. Take the following example:

I Have Not Decided as Yet

In a city, a person was standing at a crossing where four roads were leading to different directions. It was a new city to the person. He asked a passerby, "Where does this road lead to?" The passerby told the name of the place. The person asked further, "Where does that road lead to?" The passerby again told the name of the place. The person asked the same question about other two roads. The passerby told the names of the places. The person asked further, "Which road should I take?" On this, the passerby asked the person, "Where do you want to go?" The person replied, "That I have not decided as yet." The passerby told him back, "Then you can take any road. It will make no difference."

This situation happens when you are not clear about your goals. When you set your goals specifically, these help you in the following ways:

Direction for Action

When you set your goals specifically, these provide you direction for action. Based on these goals, either long-term or short-term, you devise your action. Depending on the nature of your activities through which you want to realise your vision, you may require resources of different types—physical, financial, and human. You can plan for these resources much in advance and mobilise them at right time. You get ample time to allocate these resources to different sub-activities in order to get maximum output from them.

Motivation for Action

Specifically-set goals not only provide you direction for action but they motivate you to take that action willingly. While your vision itself may provide you motivation for doing better, clearly-specified goals energise you to become more motivated as you see your achievement in near-term. In a near-term, you set goals, take action and get feedback of this action. If the feedback of your action shows positive result, you become motivated to increase the intensity of that action. If the feedback does not show positive result, you may modify that action immediately without wasting your time and effort much. In fact, high achievers want quick feedback of their action. This feedback is quick only when goals are split into shorter-term too.

Why Don't Some People Set Goals?

There was a joke on the Internet:

Where Am I?

A man was flying in the sky with the help of a parachute. At a point of time, he felt that he was not aware exactly where he was. He saw a man on the ground and asked him loudly, "Where am I at this moment?" The man on

the ground replied, "You are at 30 degree north and 75 degree west at this moment." Back came the question from the man who was flying, "Are you a scientist?" The man on the ground replied, "Yes, but how did you know?" The man in the sky told, "Because your answer is very specific, but still I could not get where I am." The man on the ground asked the man in the sky, "Are you a manager?" The man in the sky replied, "Yes, but how did you know?" The man on the ground told, "Because they are the persons who do not know where they are and why they are there."

Well, this is just a joke that does not mean to offend anyone but the question is: do many people not do the same thing as the man on the ground remarked? The answer is: there are plenty of such people who do not know where they are and why they are there. They do not have clear goals. With the result, either they do not make efforts or even if they make efforts, these remain virtually directionless. With the result, such people remain stranded. There are many reasons why people do not set goals for themselves. Some of the major reasons are as follows:

1. *Lack of Ambition:* In general, people who have ambition in their life set their goals while those who do not have ambition do not set goals. Ambition is the state of strong desire for achieving any thing. Those people who lack this ambition have limited thinking and have a feeling that they can do without specific goals.

2. *Low Self-esteem:* People having low-self esteem do not have confidence in their capabilities. Therefore, they are not internally motivated to set their goals.

3. *Lack of Realisation of Importance of Goals:* Many people are not aware about the importance of goals. They feel that goal-setting is a futile and time-consuming exercise.

4. *Fear of Failure:* When people set goals, they measure their performance in the light of these goals. When the performance is not in accordance with the goals, they develop a feeling of failure. Without goals, they are not likely to develop such a feeling because they do not know where they have to go. Those who have such a feeling avoid goal setting.

5. *Lack of Knowledge about Goal-setting:* Many people are not really aware about how to set goals. Goal-setting is a step-by-step process which requires visualisation and analysis. Those who are not aware about these often fail to set goals.

6. *Procrastination:* Procrastination is the habit of putting today's work on tomorrow which never comes. Those who say that I will set my goals tomorrow fail to set goals.

If you look at reasons behind why people do not set their goals, you will find that most of the reasons are related to people's unwillingness to set goals rather than the time or mechanism involved in goal-setting. You will also observe that these people are not oriented to high achievement. By knowing these reasons about lack of goal-setting, you may safeguard yourself against these reasons.

GOAL SETTING

After understanding how goals are important for you and why some people do not set goals and the consequence of this, you are in a better position to set your own goals. Goal-setting is a process which happens frequently because you have to set different types of goals in your life for different periods. However, for all these goals, you may adopt the same principles. These principles may be expressed in a single word SPECIAL in which each letter specifies a particular principle of goal setting:

S = Specific

P = Practical

E = Energising

C = Calculable

I = Integrated

A = Achievable

L = Longevity

Let us see how these principles of goal setting can be followed.

Specific

A goal must be specific so that it pinpoints exactly what type of action is required to achieve this goal. A mere wishful thinking about a desired end result is not a specific goal. For example, if you say that my goal is to read this book or that book, it is not specific. When you say that my goal is to read this book or that book within fifteen days, that is specific because it expresses what action you must take to achieve your goal.

Practical

In order to make your goal meaningful and contribute in the process of being high achiever, it must be practical. A practical goal is one that is set by taking into account your own capabilities and the environment in which you use your capabilities to achieve your goals. If you take away any of these elements, your goals do not remain practical; these may become only wishful thinking which is unlikely to be converted into reality.

Energising

Your goal should be energising to you, that is, you are able to draw inspiration from your goals. You can make your goals energising when you make your goals challenging.

Generally, high achievers show better performance when they have challenges before them and not in their absence. After all, in a tournament, the winning team shows its best performance against its toughest opponent but becomes complacent against weaker opponents.

Calculable

Your goals should be calculable so that you can find out whether your efforts are achieving these goals or not. To make your goals calculable, it is better that you set them in quantitative measurement. For example, if you want to be the fastest runner, you must define your goals in terms of time that you will take in completing a race. Where the goals are not measurable quantitatively, you can set them in qualitative terms but specify the characteristics which you will use to measure these qualitative terms. For example, if you are a human resource manager and have set the goal to raise the level of morale of employees within six months, you must develop the yardsticks to measure whether the employees' morale has been raised.

Integrated

Your goals should be integrated. It means your goals should take care of different aspects of your life. These aspects are physical, mental, spiritual, financial, family, and social. While setting your goals, you must maintain a balance in these aspects of your life. If you leave any one of them, your goals may not be meaningful for you itself. Similarly, over-emphasising one aspect at the cost of others is also not desirable.

Achievable

Your goals must be achievable. Though your goals should be challenging so that these take the most from you, these must not be unachievable even after taking the most from you. When you set unachievable goals and do not achieve them, the situation will develop inferiority complex in you.

Ultimately, this will destroy your self-esteem. It is necessary to avoid such a situation.

Longevity

Your goal-setting must work on the principle of longevity. This principle implies that the achievement of a shorter-term goal should contribute to the achievement of a longer-term goal. Similarly, the achievement of a longer-term goal should contribute to the achievement of your vision. In fact, your goals for different periods have end-means relationship. What is your goal today will become means for your future goal. This process continues. For example, if you want to become the top-level successful business executive, your first goal may be to get admission in top-grade management institute. You put efforts for getting admission. When you get admission, it becomes a means for learning management techniques in order to become top-level successful executive. This progression continues throughout the life.

Guidelines for Goal Setting

In setting your goals, you can follow the following guidelines:

1. Start your goals with the word 'to' to be followed by the achievement. For example, state, "my goal is to pass my examination with distinction."
2. Never express your goals as wish. Mere wish does not involve your commitment. For example, when you say, "I wish to pass my examination with distinction is not a goal in true sense."
3. Set your goals after considering all the relevant factors that may affect your goal-achievement.
4. Set your goals keeping in mind their impact on what you want to achieve ultimately in the life.
5. Increase the level of your goals at each successive time. That will put you nearer to your vision.

6. Review your goals periodically to ensure that you are progressing in the right direction.
7. Never hesitate to change your goals if they are not consistent with your values and self-esteem.

Examples of Good Goal Setting

The following examples show how goals should be set so that they provide definite direction for action:

1. In the context of business: "My goal is to double profit every three years and sales every four years." This goal is measurable in terms of time and provides definite direction.
2. In the context of health: "My goal is to reduce my weight by five kilos within three months." This is specific about what is to be done by which time.
3. In the context of competitive examination: "My goal is to get selected in IAS in my first attempt." This is specific in terms of number of attempt.
4. In the context of game: "My goal is to complete 100 meter race within ten seconds in another two years." This is specific in terms of the result to be achieved and the time within which this is to be achieved.

Examples of Poor Goal Setting

Many people do not define their goals as sharply as indicated above. Their goals are vague and do not provide definite direction for action. Some examples of such goals are as follows:

1. In the context of business: "My goal is to earn maximum profit." This is not specific as maximisation of profit is not measurable. Similarly, it is not specific in terms of time too.
2. In the context of health: "My goal is to reduce my weight." This does not indicate how much weight is to be reduced by what time.

3. In the context of competitive examination: "My goal is to compete in IAS examination." This does not show commitment to the goal and getting success therein.
4. In the context of game: "My goal is to participate in 100 meter race and win it." Winning part of 100 meter race is good but this is not sufficient unless time to be taken is defined based on competitors' time.

PREPARE AND EXECUTE PLANS FOR ACHIEVING GOALS

After you have set specific and clear goals, you must prepare and execute plans to achieve these goals. Goal-setting in itself is not sufficient; it must be supported by suitable plans and consequent actions to translate the goals into specific results. Your plans must be in accordance with your goals. When you wear a suit, what thing do you keep in mind? You ensure that the suit is according to your personality. The coat and trouser should match each other. The shirt and tie should match the suit. The socks and shoes match the suit. Same is the case with goals and plans. If both match, goal attainment will be easier. If they do not match, goal attainment will be in jeopardy.

A plan is a commitment to a particular action that is necessary to achieve a specific goal. The plan involves determining of what action is to be taken, how the action is to be taken, and when the action is to be taken. In preparing and executing plans for achieving your goals, you may adopt the following steps:

1. Translate goals into manageable steps.
2. Identify necessary activities.
3. Prepare schedule and perform activities.
4. Measure performance results.
5. Take corrective measures.

Let us see how you can go through these steps.

Translate Goals into Manageable Steps

Your goals show your commitment towards achieving certain results within a specified period. But these goals are generally broad. Therefore, for achieving them, they must be converted into manageable steps. Each of these steps must progressively contribute to goal attainment. Each of these steps may be in the form of a sub-goal derived from your main goal. By dividing the main goal into manageable steps, you can complete these steps more easily. For example, if your goal is to become top-level successful executive, you may translate this goal into manageable steps by dividing it into steps—getting admission into a management institute, completing management education, getting inducted into a management cadre of a company, continuous upward progression, and so on. Even a particular step like getting admission in a management institute, completing management education, and so on can be divided further into steps. Ultimately, you will arrive at a step where further division may not be required. While translating your goals into manageable steps, take care of the following:

1. A manageable step must be meaningful and indicate clearly as to how this will help in achieving a particular goal.
2. The step must provide the standard against which the result of an action can be compared so that you can ensure that your action is leading you in the right direction.
3. The step must be time-bound action so that when several such actions are completed, you achieve your goal timely.

Identify Necessary Activities

After translating a goal into manageable steps, necessary activities must be identified. Necessary activities are those

whose successful performance ensures the completion of a step. In identifying necessary activities, you may apply deductive method. In deductive method of identifying activities for completing a step, the question is asked: what activities are necessary for completing a particular step? In the answer of this question, you may identify various activities based on your logic and experience. At this stage, it is quite possible that you may identify several activities and some of which may not be necessary. In order to overcome this problem, the deductive method asks the question about each of the activities further: why is this activity necessary or what does this activity contribute? When the answer of this question about an activity is satisfactory, it should be classified as necessary. If the answer is not satisfactory, you must have a re-look at the desirability of the activity. In identifying the activities, you must ensure the following:

1. All the activities that are necessary for completing a particular step should be performed.
2. No unnecessary activity should be performed.
3. There is no duplication in performing a necessary activity.

Prepare Schedule and Perform Activities

After you have identified necessary activities, you must prepare schedule for performing these activities. Schedule is a kind of time table for performing various activities. This schedule should be prepared for daily work, weekly work, monthly work, or work for even a longer period. However, there should be synchronisation among the schedules for varying periods. Schedule for a shorter period must be derived from a longer period. While schedule for a longer period may have some flexibility, there is very little scope of flexibility in a schedule for daily work. Therefore, while preparing the daily schedule,

classify your activities into three categories—critical activities that must be performed on the same day, important activities that should be performed on the same day later, and less important activities that may be performed on the same day if time is available, may be postponed, or delegated to others if possible. This way, you can focus your attention on critical and important activities. It is essential that you prepare your daily schedule early in the morning, either on a piece of paper which is preferable because this exercise eases you from the burden of memorising the daily schedule, or in your mind if the list of activities is not long.

While preparing your daily schedule or schedule for longer period, you must analyse two things—time to be taken by an activity and sequence of various activities. Time to be taken by an activity can be estimated based on your experience or based on the experiences of others. You can take the help of such experienced persons for determining the time requirement of an activity. Whenever the activity is entirely new and no clue is available about time to be taken, you can determine the time after performing the activity for some time. During this process, you can eliminate those processes which are not central to the activity. After identifying the time to be taken by each activity, prepare the sequence of various activities. Those activities that have interdependence, have to be performed according to their nature of interdependence, that is, the preceding activity must be performed first followed by the succeeding activity. Where the activities are independent, perform those activities first which are critical and require more energy. These activities should be followed by important activities. At the closing period of day's work, perform light activities. This type of work scheduling reduces your work stress. It is preferable that you find some time at the end of your work to take a look at your day's work.

Measure Performance Results

When you perform various activities, you get some results. Measure these results and compare these with the standards that you have fixed for a day's work. Similar process can be adopted to measure and compare performance results on weekly, monthly, or yearly basis. For measuring performance, either you can take the time that has been devoted in performing a particular activity or you can take the specific result that has been achieved by performing an activity. In some cases, the combination of both can be taken. For example, if you are preparing for your examination and you have put your target of reading for 12 hours per day, you can measure your performance in the light of this time. However, this measurement may become one-sided because time spent on study has been taken care of while the quality of study aspect has been left which may be even more significant than the time. Therefore, you are required to measure quality of your study too. This can be measured in terms of number of pages read per day as well as the number of lessons prepared.

Take Corrective Measures

When you measure your performance results and compare these with the standards set for these, you can find result in two forms. First, your performance results match with the standards. In this case, you are not required to take any corrective measure because you are well on your target. Second, your performance results do not match with the standards. In this case, you are required to take corrective measures in order to ensure that your performance results match with the standards. In order to identify what corrective measures you are required to take, find out the reasons of deviation between the performance results and the standards. There may be two possible reasons for such a deviation:

1. Your performance falls short of requirement to meet the standards. In this case, analyse your performance

and find out where you have lacked. With more efforts, you can improve your performance.

2. Your goal is too high to be achieved within the constraints in which you are working. These constraints may be in the form of your own capabilities and the environmental pressures. Since both of these can be overcome only in the long-run, you do not have control over these in the short-term. Therefore, revise your goal to make it more practical and achievable in the short-term.

PURSUE EXCELLENCE IN YOUR WORK

If you want to achieve your goals comprehensively, you must pursue excellence in your work. Excellence is the state of excelling or being exceptionally good. The concept of excellence has been extended to all walks of life. Excellence does not happen miraculously but springs from practising personal efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency refers to how much inputs have been used to get certain amount of outputs, that is, effort-result relationship. Effectiveness refers to the degree to which an effort is goal-directed. For achieving excellence, you have to be both efficient and effective. In order to be excellent, you may pursue the following things:

1. Adopt total quality approach.
2. Practise thriftness.
3. Practise time management.
4. Avoid procrastination.
5. Put hard work.

Let us see how you can follow the above things.

Adopt Total Quality Approach

For achieving your goals, you are required to follow total quality approach. Quality is a sense of appreciation that something is better than something else. Thus, quality is always measured in some context. If your present effort is

better than your previous effort, it has quality. Similarly, if your effort brings better result than that of others, it has quality. You should pursue such an approach towards quality in your every activity to make it perfect.

Quality is being emphasised in every walk of life. With the result, organisations created by people follow total quality management concept which emphasises not only product quality that these organisations offer to their customers but also the way in which the product is offered, the way in which the internal processes of these organisations take place, and the way these organisations develop their people. However, the ultimate source of total quality management is the people's approach towards quality. If you have positive approach towards quality, all your activities will have quality. The quality of work ultimately differentiates between high achievers and low achievers. Remember:

If you chase quality, quantity will chase you.

If may be important how much work you do but it is more important how much quality work you do. It is not important how many hours you sleep, it is more important how deeply you sleep.

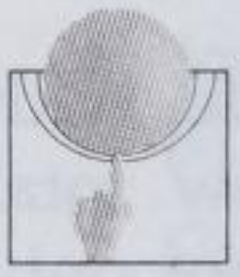
You can increase the quality of your work by taking lessons from your own experience or by using benchmarking. Benchmarking is a process of identifying practices of benchmarked person, may be your ideal, or any high achiever in your field or any other field. Based on this benchmarking, you can adopt practices to improve the quality of your work. Subsequently, you can try to improve this quality based on your own experience. This process is based on the theme:

See what others do and try to improve upon that.

Practise Thriftness

For achieving your goals to become a high achiever, you must practise thriftness in all facets of your life. Thriftness

involves managing resources in the most economical way. However, thriftness does not mean being miser. Consider the following example:



Wastage of Matchsticks

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya founded Banaras Hindu University, the largest University of India, in 1916. For establishing the University, he relied on donations from generous people rather than relying on government funding. For this purpose, he contacted many people across the country. In this process, he visited Kolkata (Calcutta at that time) to meet G. D. Birla, a renowned industrialist and great philanthropist. Birla Ji agreed to meet Malaviya Ji. Malaviya Ji was put comfortably in the visitor's room. Meanwhile, Birla Ji came in that room and found that some matchsticks were scattered on the central table. He collected all the sticks and put them in the matchbox. Malaviya Ji saw this behaviour of Birla Ji and framed an impression about him that he was very miser and thought that such a miser might not contribute anything for building the University. When Birla Ji asked Malaviya Ji about the purpose of his visit, he hided the actual purpose and told that he was in Kolkata and just wanted to meet him. Birla Ji realised that Malaviya Ji was hiding the real purpose because of matchstick event and told him, "I have heard that you have planned to establish a great University with the help of donations. What contribution do you want from me? Please do not go by the event of matchsticks. I cannot tolerate any wastage howsoever small it is." Subsequently, Birla Ji donated the highest amount for the cause of establishing the University.

What does this example suggest? Do not waste any of your resource howsoever small it may be because once you develop the habit of wasting small resources, you can develop the habit of wasting precious resources in future. Remember that resources at the disposal of a person are

always limited in comparison to his requirement, no matter how big or small the person is.

Besides checking the wastage of resources, you are required to put your resources for a work in which they find their best use. For this purpose, you must develop resource utilisation plan. This plan begins with identifying your resources, work to be undertaken, and rational distribution of the resources for each work. Through this process, you can get better result even with limited resources. What is true for an individual is true for a society or for the country as a whole. In our country, most of the people follow wastefulness while in Japan, most of the people follow thriftness in the matter of resource utilisation.

Practise Time Management

Time is the most scarce element in the life of everyone. This is more so in the case of high achievers as they have to put more work for high achievement as compared to low achievers irrespective of the fact that for both—high achievers and low achievers, a day consists of 24 hours. Unlike other resources, time once lost can never be regained. With the result, one's work suffers in the proportion of time lost. Time management ensures that the time is not lost. It also stimulates proper allocation of time to different activities. Therefore, you must practise time management to ensure rational use of your time. In time management, emphasis is put on two aspects—eliminating those factors that are time wasters and making rational use of time.

For eliminating time wasters, you have to identify these. Though these time wasters may differ from person to person, following time wasters are more common:

1. *Unorderly method of working:* Many persons follow this practice in which they waste their lot of time in searching things for use. This is true for office as well as home.

2. *Unnecessary gossip:* Many persons engage themselves in unnecessary gossip with their friends and colleagues and waste their precious time unnecessarily.
3. *Unscheduled visitors:* These visitors may knock your door at any time and can take lot of time.
4. *Too many meetings:* Too many meetings are the basic characteristics of some of the organisations. Many such meetings are useless.
5. *Family tension:* In such a situation, lot of time is wasted in overcoming family tension.
6. *Procrastination:* People having the habit of procrastination spend much of their time thinking about whether they should do a particular work today or not.
7. *Failure to set priorities:* Lack of priorities in performing activities tends to waste lot of time on trifle matters leaving aside the more important ones.
8. *Lack of scheduling:* With lack of scheduling or improper scheduling, people get confused about what and when activities should be performed.
9. *Attempting to do so many things at a time:* This practice becomes self-made time waster because people cannot concentrate on any activity.

These are the major time wasters. You can identify your time wasters based on your experience. After identifying these time wasters, you must take steps to eliminate these. In those cases, where time wasters are external like unscheduled visitors, meetings, etc., perhaps you cannot eliminate them altogether but you can take steps to minimise their adverse impact. For eliminating time wasters or minimising their impact, you can take the following steps:

1. *Put everything in order.* Follow the principle: there must be a place for everything and everything must be in its place.

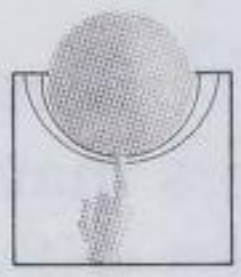
2. *Avoid gossip.* It is not only a time waster but creates unnecessary mental tension some time.
3. Set priorities of your work for each day in the morning. That will ensure completing of your day's work.
4. Prepare schedule for your day's work showing starting and ending time of each activity. Follow this schedule strictly.
5. Concentrate yourself on one activity at a time. This will ensure perfect performance of the activity.
6. To the extent possible, fix time for meeting visitors and inform them about this. Still some visitors may come who are likely to take more time; discuss with them briefly and advise them to visit later for some detailed discussion.
7. Try to create congenial environment both at home and workplace. This will not only save your time but become energising to you.

Apart from eliminating time wasters, you must follow time management by allocating your time to different activities in such a way that each activity gets your time in proportion to its contribution to your goal achievement. If an activity takes disproportionate time, evaluate the nature of the activity to find out whether the activity is relevant to your goal achievement. If it is not, drop out this activity as this is more time consuming but less result producing. Ultimately, only those activities will find place in your kitty which are relevant to your goal achievement.

Avoid Procrastination

In a family, a quite elderly person died. Everyone of the family was in grief but no one wept on this as the person was quite old. But a person of the family started weeping quite loudly. The neighbours solaced him and told that the person was quite old and his death had not caused any

vacuum in the family. On this, the person who was weeping replied, "I am not weeping because the eldest person of the family died. I am weeping because the death has seen my house." Procrastination is like this death. Once it sees anyone, it follows him consistently. Procrastination, that is putting off work for tomorrow, is one of the most important factors that block goal achievement. It starts with putting off some trivial matters initially. Subsequently important matters are put off. Finally the critical matters are also put off. With the result, failure is the only outcome. Take the following example:



I Will Do it Tomorrow

In a forest, there were many birds. One of them was quite lazy in its approach. Before the winter set on, all the birds started making their nest and advised the lazy bird to do so. The lazy bird thought of making the nest after the start of winter. The winter started and the bird thought of making the nest when the winter became chilly. The winter became chilly. During the winter night, she used to think of making the nest early morning. But when the morning used to come, the bird thought of enjoying the sunshine and thought of making the nest in the evening. In this process, many mornings and evenings passed but the bird could not make the nest. Meanwhile the winter became more chilly and the bird fell sick because of winter and died ultimately.

Do many people not do like this? Such people adopt the approach: "Whatever you have to do today, do it tomorrow; whatever you have to do tomorrow, do it day after tomorrow. What is hurry, you have to live for years." Such people, in fact, cannot do anything meaningful. As against this approach, an alternative approach is: "Whatever you have to do tomorrow, do it today; what ever you have to do today, do it just now because you do not know how long you will be here." So do not follow

the practice of procrastination otherwise you will never get opportunities to become high achiever. Your work will get delayed; your goal-achievement will be thwarted; and you will become hopeless. When there is no hope, how will you become high achiever? There is a famous psychological rule:

> *If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you have always got.*

Put Hard Work

If you look at any high achiever in any field, you will find that he puts hard work. It is very common with high achievers that they work for at least 15-16 hours a day. In some situations, this period tends to increase and not decrease. In fact, high achievement is not something which anyone can serve you in a silver plate and you take it. It is always earned by hard work and that too in a right direction. Henary Ford, the famous US-industrialist, used to say, "There is no substitute for hard work. The harder you work, the luckier you get." Hard work is also recognised by the society. For example, Andrew Carnegie, the famous US-industrialist said:

> *The average person puts only 25 per cent of his energy and ability into his work. The world takes off its hat to those who put in more than 50 per cent of their capacity and stands on its head for those few and far between souls who devote 100 per cent.*

For putting hard work, you have to inculcate your habit for that. While your challenging goals may motivate you for hard work, by practice, you can develop on your own the habit of putting hard work. When you put little extra effort, you get little better result and become happy. When you become happy, you put more extra effort to get still better result and become more happy. This progression continues until the relationship between hard work, result, and happiness is broken. Once this relationship is broken,

the progression stops. You are required to maintain this relationship in spite of the hardships. Remember:

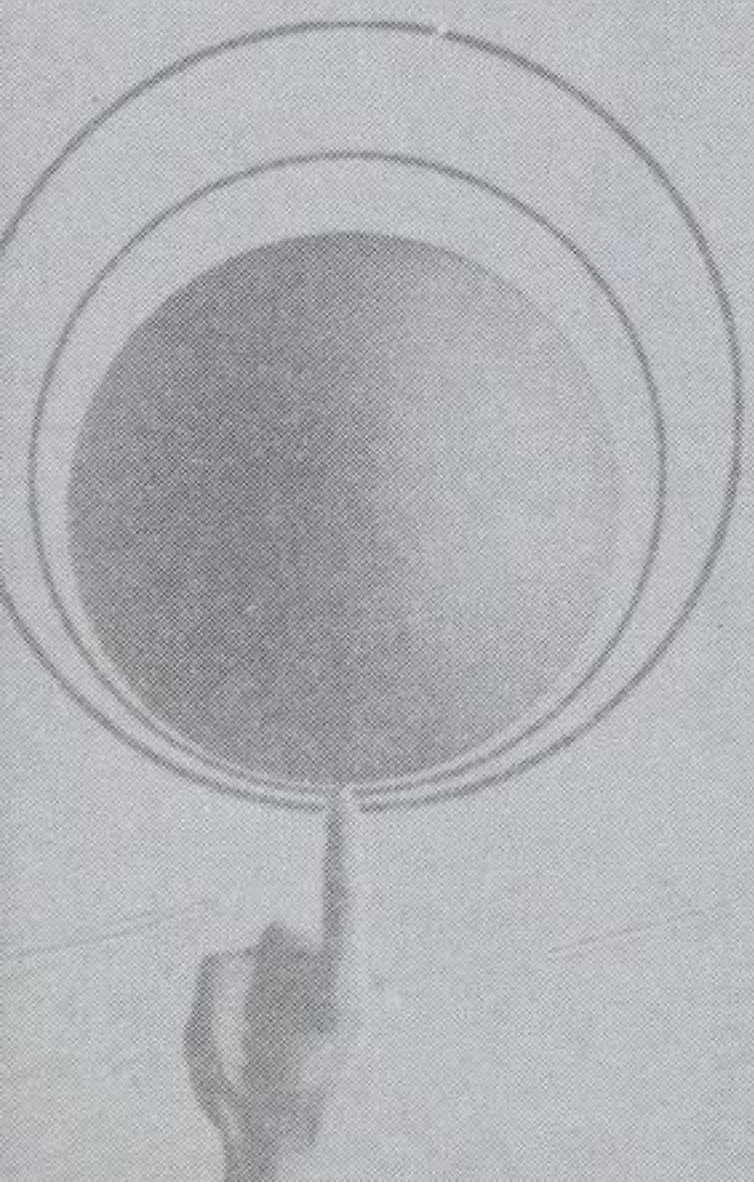
The person that turns over the most rocks, finds the gems.

When you put hard work, it must be genuine. If you work for 12 hours or 15 hours, or any number of hours, it should be well-directed and not merely to impress others. In an office, an employee coined the following approach of hard work:

Come early, go late.

Look busy, do nothing.

YOUR ACTION PLAN



1. Have you set your vision? If not, set it at the earliest taking into account your core ideology and envisioned future.
2. Define your goals for five years, one year, and for each month. While defining your goals, apply SPECIAL principles. It is better that you write these goals in your diary.
3. Translate a particular goal into manageable steps. While performing these steps, set your target on daily basis. In the evening, evaluate your day's performance and compare it with your target. If there is any deviation, take immediate action to overcome this.

8

MANAGE YOUR STRESS LEVEL

Doing Things with Optimum Stress

MODERN life is full of stress. This is true for all persons though high achievers have to pass through much more number of stressors than low achievers. Therefore, it is essential that you understand the nature of stress, its causes, and its consequences so that you get yourself prepared to manage your stress level effectively. Stress is basically the impact of one object on another. There are three terms which are used synonymously to denote this impact phenomenon—stress, strain, and pressure, though the use of the term stress is more common. Stress is a physical phenomenon but this phenomenon can be applied to human life too. When stress is used in the context of human life, it represents the pressure that people feel in their life. As the life progresses, people feel more such pressures. Those who progress faster feel more such pressures. Those who are engaged in high achievement oriented activities feel more such pressures as evident by the following table:

High stressful occupations

Occupation	*Stress Score*	*Occupation*	*Stress Score*
U.S. President	176.6	College professor	54.2
Senior executive	108.6	School principal	51.7
Surgeon	99.5	Psychologist	50.0
Air-traffic controller	83.1	Personnel recruiter	41.8
Public relations executive	78.5	Hospital administrator	39.6
Real estate agent	73.1	Economist	38.7
Stock broker	71.7	Mechanical engineer	38.3
Pilot	68.7	Bank officer	35.4
Architect	66.9	Industrial designer	32.1
Lawyer	64.3	Accountant	31.1
Physician	64.0	Financial planner	26.3

STRESS PROCESS

Stress causes behavioural change which is in the form of deviation from usual behaviour. If the stressor, may be an event or news, is within one's tolerance level, the

behavioural change will not be very unusual and will not cause any worry. When the stressor is strong and is beyond one's tolerance, the behavioural change will be very unusual and will cause worry. This process works in the following manner:

1. When a person encounters a stressor, he feels some degree of panic and begins to think how to cope, that is, how to make adjustment with the stressor. This adjustment is required because the stressor creates a new situation in the patterned life.
2. If the stressor is too strong, the person may be unable to cope with it at the first instance. Subsequently, he tries to gather strengths—physical, psychological, or both—and begins to resist the negative effects of the stressor.
3. If the person has prolonged exposure to an extreme stressor and is unable to cope with it, he feels exhaustion. At this stage, the person literally gives up and can no longer fight the stressor.

It is not necessary that all the three steps of stress process are relevant to all types of stressors. Some stressors which are mild can be taken care of at the first step itself. Some stressors which are strong enough and cannot be taken care of at the first step, can be taken care of at the second step. Only few extremely strong stressors pass through the third step. However, what is a mild stressor and what is a strong stressor does not depend solely on the stressor itself but also on the nature of the person who is encountering the stress.

WHAT IS OPTIMUM LEVEL STRESS?

Though stress, in general, is treated as bad, it is not true. In fact, many stressors are positive and bring the best from a person. Have you faced a situation in which you were asked to finish the work within a stipulated time though the time given to you was not sufficient? If yes, what did

you do in that situation? Perhaps, you might have put your utmost energy to complete the work within the stipulated time. You might have treated the stressor as a challenge to your capability and not merely as a stressor. The stressor which provides challenge for better work is positive and is called eustress. The stressor which is beyond the coping ability of a person is negative and is called distress. In common parlance, this distress is used simply as stress. That is why we associate negative connotation with stress. Thus, optimum level stress is one that provides you challenge for better work. Beyond that, it becomes distress. Stress below the optimum level is also bad because that fails to ignite you for better performance. However, optimum level stress is not fixed but varies with the persons. What is optimum level stress for one person may be distress for another person. Similarly, what is optimum level stress for one person may be very mild level stress for another person which fails to enthuse him for better work. Therefore, you have to determine what the optimum level of stress is for you. While determining the optimum level stress, take two factors into account:

1. Type A or B personality profile.
2. Hardiness.

Type A or B Personality Profile

Persons with *A* or *B* personality profile react differently to the same set of stressors. Type *A* people are extremely competitive, highly committed to work, and have a strong sense of time urgency. Type *B* people are less competitive, less committed to work, and have a weaker sense of time urgency. Following table presents the characteristics of *A* and *B* type persons:

A Type Person	*B Type Person*
Is always moving	Is never in hurry
Walks rapidly	Is patient
Is impatient	Does not brag
Does two things at a time	Plays for fun, not for win

Is aggressive	Relaxes without guilt
Is competitive	Is mild mannered
Feels time pressure	Has no pressing deadline

Persons with personality *A* type react strongly against stressors particularly those which are directly related to their work. Persons with personality *B* type react mildly to different stressors and experience lesser stress. The classification of personality *A* and *B* types shows extreme ends. In practice, people do not have either *A* or *B* type personality in absolute form; they have only orientation towards *A* or *B*. Therefore, your optimum level stress depends on whether you have *A* type orientation or B type orientation. If you have *A* type orientation, you must provide safeguard against those stressors particularly which have direct impact on your way of working.

Hardiness

Besides *A* and *B* personality profiles, different persons have varying degree of stress tolerance. State of hardiness indicates the degree to which a person can tolerate stress. People with higher hardiness have higher degree of ability to cope with stress as compared to people having lower hardiness. People with higher hardiness tend to see stress as a change that provides opportunity for advancement and growth. Such people are seen as relatively unlikely to suffer illness or other type of physical change if they experience high level of stress. On the other hand, people with lower hardiness have more difficulties in coping with stress. Generally, the people with higher hardiness possess the following qualities:

1. They have internal locus of control with a belief that they can turn any external threat into opportunity. Because of this belief, they face any stress boldly.
2. They have high degree of optimism. Optimism is the extent to which a person sees life in relatively positive or negative terms. An optimist sees positive

aspect of an event (even if the event may be stressful) while a pessimist sees negative aspect of the event. Because of this difference in approach, people differ in their ability to cope with stress.

3. They are highly committed to their work and other activities of their life. Because of this commitment, they develop a particular mental framework which acts as a barrier to any stress. They do this by managing their emotions effectively.

Because of these characteristics, many persons having orientation to *A* personality profile are better able to cope with stress as compared to many persons having orientation to *B* personality profile. Therefore, your optimum level stress will depend on your degree of hardiness. If you have high degree of hardiness, even a high degree of stress may be optimum for you. In alternative case, lower degree of stress may be optimum for you. In order to assess your hardiness, answer this question: Do you generally experience one or more of the following symptoms?

1. Inability to concentrate.
2. Irritability.
3. Feeling of hopelessness.
4. Memory loss.
5. Unfounded fear.
6. Loss of self-esteem.
7. Lack of deep sleep.
8. Physical stress of any type.

If you have any of these symptoms frequently, you tend to have lower hardiness. If the symptom is only casual, you should not feel worried about the stress as it is momentary.

FACTORS THAT CAUSE STRESS

There are several factors—both internal to a person as well as external to him—that cause stress. These factors tend to

generate conditions that work as stressors. Though even a single major stressor like death of a near one may cause extreme stress, various stressors usually combine to press a person in a variety of ways until the stress is properly handled. Further, some stressors have long-term impact while others may have relatively short-term impact. Various such stressors are as follows:

1. Work demand.
2. Life and career changes.
3. Stressful home environment.
4. Poor work-life linkage.
5. General environment.

Let us see how these stressors operate and how strong they are.

Work Demand

While working in an organisation, people may experience different types of cross pressures. Consider the following types of organisational cross pressures:

The boss wants more production; subordinates want more consideration.

Customers want faster deliveries; peers request schedule delay.

Consultants suggest change; subordinates resist change.

The rule book provides a formula; the staff says it will not work.

There may be several such types of requirements. Every work has certain requirements that its performer must meet. To the extent, the performer is not able to meet these requirements, he may experience stress. Though different types of work differ in terms of the demand that they put on the performers, usually such a demand is in the following forms:

1. Task demand.
2. Role demand.
3. Interpersonal demand.

Task Demand

Every work has a variety of tasks. A task is a distinct work activity. In order to complete a work, these related tasks have to be completed. Where the number of tasks in a work is numerous and they vary significantly, they create stress on the work performer. If you see the work of senior executives or entrepreneurs, you will find that their work consists of numerous tasks with each task being significantly different. That is why they experience high level stress. Besides the nature of the work, other aspects of the work also generate stress if they are not congenial. Following such aspects work as stressors:

1. Work overload acts as a stressor. Work overload occurs when a person has more work than he can handle. This overload can be either quantitative—too many tasks to be performed or too little time to perform them, or qualitative—the work performer may believe that he lacks ability to perform the work. A moderate degree of workload related stress is considered to be optimum because it leads to high level of motivation and use of energy.
2. The conditions under which various tasks are to be performed also affect the degree of stress. Conditions include both physical and psychological conditions. If the physical conditions of task performance are poor, these create stress. Consider the work of fire fighters and the conditions in which they work. The job of a fire fighter is very stressful. Psychological conditions of task performance also become stressful. Consider the task of a surgeon. It is stressful specially if the operation is quite critical for the patient.
3. The timing of task performance may also be stressful. Generally, task performance in night shift is more

stressful except for anti-social elements. Similarly, the task that does not have a pre-defined time schedule is stressful. A medical practitioner may have a complaint that when he is at dining table, his patient rings that he is having problem in stool passing. A police officer may have a complaint that he is on duty for all 24 hours.

4. Work that does not have security of tenure becomes stressful because the work performer always has a fear about his future career. Just consider the stress that was experienced by computer software technicians during 2002 when a number of companies were forced to layoff their employees throughout the world.
5. The work in which the work performer feels that work performance and its reward are not properly linked becomes stressful. Whether this feeling is right or wrong is immaterial. A manager complains that 'it becomes very frustrating if you are asked to do more while your salary stays flat.' Besides the monetary reward that is attached with the work, work reward also includes work's social importance, career progression, and quality of work satisfaction.

Role Demand

Role demand also can be stressful. Role is a set of expected behaviour associated with a particular position in a group or organisation. Expected behaviour can be formal (work-related and explicit) and informal (social and implicit). The role performer tries to behave according to this expectation. However, he may commit errors in perceiving this expectation which others have from him. When two sets of expectation differ, the role performer experiences stress which may be in three forms—role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload. These three work as stressors in the following manner:

1. Role ambiguity arises when a role is not clear. In a work setting, role ambiguity arises because of poor

description of work to be performed. Often, medical representatives complain that they are not very clear whether they have only to contact doctors to motivate them to prescribe the medicines manufactured by their company or they are also expected to contact their dealers and retailers to find out the usage pattern of their company's medicines, availability of medicines, etc. With the result, they experience stress.

2. Role conflict arises when the role is clear but the expectations of two or more persons are contradictory. Your boss says you to work overtime and on weekends, while your wife and children say you to come back home at the earliest. You are caught between two expectations and your stress level goes up. Role conflict also arises when role requirement differs from personal requirement. If your boss says you to do something which you feel is unethical, what will you do? Your anxiety of doing this or not doing this is stressful to you.
3. Role overload occurs when expectations for the role exceed the person's capabilities. Such role overload may be in the form of putting extra burden of work on the person or the person performs more roles at a time. Role overload is functional only when it matches with a person's capabilities. Beyond that, it becomes stressful and destructive. A college teacher was specialised in teaching Chemistry. He was pressurised by his principal to teach Physics also which he accepted unwillingly. On this, his colleagues asked him, "How will you manage it?" The teacher told, "No problem, I will teach only what I know."

Interpersonal Demand

A person has to interact with others at his workplace in the process of getting his work done. In this process, he

may experience two types of stressors—interpersonal conflict and group pressure. Let us see how these act as stressors.

1. Interpersonal conflict arises between two persons because of some incompatibility among these two. This incompatibility may be because of differences in their personality, attitudes, values, and way of working. Stronger are the differences in these factors, stronger will be interpersonal conflict. This interpersonal conflict works as a stressor because it disturbs emotional relationships. You will find that a person having internal locus of control can hardly work with a person having external locus of control.
2. Group pressure exists when a group puts pressure on all its members to conform to its norms whether these norms are productive or not. The pressure may include to restrict output, to behave in a particular manner, or even to dress in a particular manner. Any member who deviates from these norms is not liked by the group and he is harassed by the group members psychologically in several ways. This harassment is a strong stressor. You might have experienced that where group members have set certain norm of productivity, anyone exceeding this productivity level is often chided by his group members.

Life and Career Changes

Life and career changes are potential sources of stress. The only difference in these changes lies in their severity. First, take the life changes. The changes that are on predictable lines are less stress-producing like getting older slowly. While changes that are not on predictable lines are more stress-producing like the sudden accident. Because of change in life, a person has to develop a new equilibrium as compared to what it was before the change. Developing this equilibrium demands extra efforts on the part of the

person while the person may perceive that the extra efforts are unwanted as these efforts will just bring him back at an equilibrium and nothing more. Therefore, putting the extra efforts becomes stressful.

Like life changes, career changes also work in the same way. Career changes in the form of demotion, separation, or transfer work as strong stressors. Sometimes, even promotion also works as a stressor particularly when there is a mismatch between a person's capability and his position. For example, when a person is promoted to a position for which he does not have required capability, he finds the new position quite stressful.

Different types of life and career changes produce different levels of stress. Following table shows some major life and career changes and their stress-producing impact.

Life and career changes and stress level

Event	*Mean Value*	*Event*	*Mean Value*
Death of spouse	100	Son/daughter leaving home	29
Divorce	73	Trouble with in-laws	29
Marital separation	65	Spouse starting work	26
Death of close family member	63	Beginning or ending school	26
Personal injury or illness	53	Change in living conditions	25
Fired at work	47	Revision of personal habits	24
Retirement	45	Trouble with boss	23
Pregnancy	40	Change in work hours or condition	20
Sex difficulties	39	Change in residence	20
Business readjustment	39		
Change in financial state (worse)	38	Change in recreation	19
Death of close friend	37	Change in social activities	18
Change to different line of work	36	Change in sleeping habits	15
Change in responsibility	29	Change in eating habits	15
		Minor violation of law	11

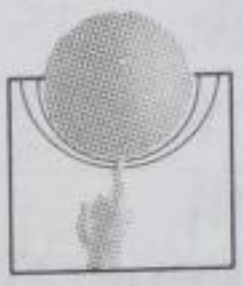
Score of stress for each event has been arrived at based on the study of large number of persons. Therefore, the scores are applicable to a significant proportion of population. For those, who fall outside this proportion

because of individual differences, these scores may not apply in the form indicated in the table. People's personality, their attitudes about a particular event, and their goals in the life are some of the differentiating factors. For example, those who attach very high value to money, change in their financial position may have higher score than the value shown in the table. Therefore, you may make suitable adjustment in the stress values for various events.

Stressful Home Environment

Work demand and life and career changes, no doubt, are stressors, but their intensity increases due to stressful home environment. Often, people carry their feelings generated at home to their workplace in the same way as they carry their work-generated feelings at home. If the home environment is stressful, this disturbs the emotional make-up of the people. Not only this becomes stressful for the people but it also makes them irritable even for small things which do not fit with their thinking.

Stressful home environment may exist in joint family as well as in nuclear family. In a joint family, if father and mother quarrel with each other even on small matters, it becomes stressing for the children. Similarly, if brothers and their wives quarrel with each other, it becomes stressing for all family members. In a nuclear family, where husband and wife have different personality characteristics, attitudes, and values, stress-producing environment is created; where both husband and wife are careerists, often stressful environment is created because of lack of incoherence in their career paths. Consider the following example to gauge the impact of family environment on stress development:



A Depressed Girl

A girl aged 26 years was working as a public relations executive in a multinational company operating in a

metropolitan city of India. The job of the public relations executive was quite demanding but she accepted it as a challenge as she considered herself quite capable for the job. As she was quite ambitious, she used to put her maximum energy on the job. She used to leave her home at 10.00 a.m. and return at about 9.00 p.m. Meanwhile, her father and mother used to quarrel with each other almost daily. That was stressing for the girl. Ultimately, both father and mother decided to live separately. On this episode, the girl felt shocked and developed depression. In order to overcome this depression, she started taking anti-depressant tablets. Though this practice provided her some relief but she felt defeated and lost the meaning of her life.

Well, this is not an isolated case but similar cases occur quite often.

Poor Work-Life Linkage

Poor work-life linkage is also stress-producing. Too much emphasis on work at the cost of life is as bad as is too much emphasis on life at the cost of work. People who emphasise their work too much often suffer from serious physical and mental ailment while people who emphasise their life too much often fail to do anything meaningful. Therefore, there is a need for maintaining proper linkage between work and life. In an alternative case, it becomes stress-producing. Generally, people having high orientation towards personality *A* profile tend to tilt work-life linkage in favour of work while people with high orientation towards personality *B* profile tend to tilt work-life linkage in favour of life.

General Environment

Besides the above factors, characteristics of general environment of a place, society, and country also act as stressors. In this case, following conclusions have emerged:

1. People living in metropolitan cities experience higher level stress than people living in smaller towns or rural areas. This is due to the fact that in metropolitan cities, life remains quite busy and people do not find time to share their feelings with others. Suppressed feelings often induce stress.
2. People who do not live in conducive environment often experience more stress. Living conditions include neighbours, physical facilities available in the surrounding, and feeling of being near to the nature.
3. Unfavourable events occurring in the society, country, or elsewhere also induce stress. Though such events may not affect a particular person directly, these may hurt his emotions. Earthquakes, droughts, floods, wars, etc. are the events that induce stress. Similarly, social class conflicts induce stress.

CONSEQUENCES OF STRESS

Before we go into the discussion of consequences of stress, let us go through the following example:

Goat and Lion

A king ordered one of his courtiers to feed good-quality feed to a goat for a month but to ensure that the goat should not gain any extra weight during this period. The courtier accepted this order. He used to feed good quality feed to the goat during the day under the supervision of an officer appointed for this purpose. During the night, the courtier used to put the goat near the cage in which a lion was put. He ensured that the lion was fed only the minimum required. This practice continued for whole of the month. At the end of the month, the king found that the goat could not gain any extra weight in spite of good-quality feed.

Why did not goat gain any extra weight in spite of good-quality feed? The answer is: the goat was always in stress because of the presence of the lion. Do we not experience similar situation in our life? While optimum level stress is positive and contributes to better performance; stress beyond this level has a number of negative consequences in the form of psychological problems, behavioural problems, and physical problems. All these problems may take different forms depending on the severity and duration of stress. Various stages of negative consequences of stress can be seen in terms of burnout. Burnout is a syndrome wherein a person breaks down emotionally and physically due to continuous high stress for long time. Human body cannot rebuild its ability to cope with stress once it is depleted beyond a certain level. As a result, people become physically and emotionally weak while trying to combat stress. Burnout is a slow process and goes through the following stages:

1. *Stage of job contentment:* enthusiasm to work with high energy level and positive attitudes.
2. *Stage of fuel shortage:* experiencing mental fatigue, frustration, disillusionment, and low morale.
3. *Stage of withdrawal and isolation:* avoiding contact with colleagues, showing anger, negativism, and emotional disturbances.
4. *Stage of crisis:* very low self-esteem, cynicism, and negative feelings.
5. *Stage of final breakdown:* alcoholism, drug addiction, suicidal tendency, heart attack, etc.

At different stages of burnout, people have different types of psychological, behavioural, and physical problems.

Psychological Problems

Stress is an emotional phenomenon and, therefore, it creates minor psychological problems at the initial stage

which tend to increase if the stress is not handled effectively. This progression is in the following manner:

1. *Anger:* hot displeasure often involving a desire for retaliation; degree of anger increases as stress persists.
2. *Irritation:* excitement leading to painful, uncomfortable, or unhealthy condition.
3. *Tension:* suppressed excitement and feeling of deviation from contentment.
4. *Anxiety:* generalised feeling of fear and apprehension.
5. *Depression:* acute tension in the form of reduced vitality.

All these psychological problems may result into disturbed emotional states, lowered self-esteem, inability to concentrate and make decisions, and job/life dissatisfaction. With these features, a person loses control on himself and faces difficulty in dealing with people at the workplace as well as at the home. The person also experiences sleeplessness and restlessness. All these affect his work performance adversely.

Behavioural Problems

The psychological problems caused by stress create behavioural problems for people as they behave according to their psychological make-up. Behavioural problems are reflected in the following forms:

1. Increased smoking and/or increased intake of tea/coffee.
2. Increased intake of tobacco-based preparation like pan masala, etc.
3. Under-eating or over-eating.
4. Increased use of medicines to overcome psychological problems.
5. Alcoholism.
6. Drug abuse.

The bahaviour of such a person becomes irritating with whom he interacts. These persons may include his boss, colleagues, subordinates, friends, family members, etc. The person develops a feeling of normlessness and social isolation which is responsible for irritating behaviour.

Physical Problems

Stress ultimately causes physical problems of different types. In fact, psychological and behavioural characteristics have their significant impact on physical state of a person. Generally, stress causes physical reactions, including autonomic, excitability of nerves, increased heart-beat rate, increased blood pressure, increased level of cholesterol, and increase/decrease in body temperature. All these physical features may result into heart trouble, ulcer, arthritis, headache, backache, stomach-related problem like intestinal disorder, and skin conditions like acne etc. Sometimes, stress causes very strange diseases. For example, in Hong Kong, about 1,00,000 adults are suffering with the disease of wetting their beds during sleep because of high stress.

In the medical history, more attention was paid to overcome physical problems caused by stress. However, psychological and behavioural problems have now also drawn the attention of medical practitioners of specialised type.

STRESS COPING STRATEGIES

You might have experienced some of the negative consequences of stress. This assertion has been drawn on the basis that stress is universal phenomenon. More the human beings progress, more is the stress that they have to encounter. Therefore, you are required to adopt some strategies through which you can cope with stress. The best strategy to cope with stress is that you avoid all those events and situations that cause stress. But the question is:

is it possible? Napolean Bonaparte, the French king during the early years of 19th century, fought many battles and wars; won these but lost the crucial battle in Russia in 1812 because of snowfall and chilly cold wind, once commented, "If you had seen one day of war, you would pray to God that you would never see another." In spite of dreaded consequences of a war, it is going on everyday in the world. Same is the case with stress. You cannot avoid all the events and situations that cause stress. You can control some events and situations but not all. However, you can reduce the negative consequences of all these stressors provided you have will power to do so. When gold is melted to test its purity, it shivers during the process of test. But pure gold remains pure gold before shivering, during the process of shivering, and after shivering. The same is the case with you. If you have will power to become high achiever, you will be high achiever before the stress, during the stress, and after the stress. Alas! you differ from gold in one crucial respect. Gold does not have emotions but you have. Therefore, you have to make suitable efforts to overcome the negative consequences of stress.

Following efforts may be helpful to manage your stress. While going through these efforts, it is not necessary that you put all efforts. It is better that you adopt a contingency (situational) approach in which you choose the efforts which fit with you. While assessing this fitness, you take into account your age, sex, job characteristics, the level of stress that you experience, and so on. These efforts are as follows:

1. Apply emotional intelligence.
2. Develop balanced work-life linkage.
3. Create congenial environment.
4. Practise meditation.
5. Do physical exercise.
6. Take the help of counselling.

Apply Emotional Intelligence

The best way to deal with stress is that you develop emotional intelligence and apply it. Emotional intelligence is the development of ability to deal with matters that have emotional contents. Emotional intelligence enables you to face the realities of life more forcefully. Since stress has emotional vulnerability, emotional intelligence helps in overcoming this vulnerability. When you apply emotional intelligence, you find that a situation causing stress is just like any other situation of the life. A situation, howsoever worse it is, has some positive features. Try to pick up these positive features instead of overemphasising negative features of the situation. Take the following example:

I Don't Want to be Sick

A person fell sick. One of his friends was a doctor who came to treat him. The patient told the doctor, "I do not want to be sick because I will reinstate my health status just as it was before I fell sick. Nothing more than that. It implies that the time which I have to spend in overcoming my sickness will be only a waste." The doctor consoled him, "No, no, friend, your health status will be much better than what it was before you fell sick."

Try to develop this approach towards stress-producing situations. You will be better off after coping with the stress than what you were much before the stress. You might have noticed that health status of many persons became much better after going through bypass surgery for heart problem treatment. One of the patients who went through this process commented, "After my bypass surgery, I feel myself younger by 10 years." Is that not a better tradeoff because of positive attitudes towards stress?

Emotional intelligence also helps to control those stress-producing situations that are within your control. It makes you prepared to face those situations boldly which

are beyond your control. Remember: if you fear from things, they will overpower you; if you face them boldly, you will overpower them. The famous English writer George Barnard Shaw has said:

> ***In this world, there is always danger for those who are afraid of it.***

Develop Balanced Work-Life Linkage

Poor work-life linkage is one of the major stressors. Therefore, you are required to develop a balanced work-life linkage. A balanced work-life linkage is one that puts proper emphasis on both work and life. There are certain dimensions of your work. In the same way, there are certain dimensions of your life too. Common work dimensions include such things as your present job (social importance of the job, job satisfaction, working hours, etc.), your career goals (career aspiration, career progression path, etc.), and interpersonal relationships at work (relationships with boss, colleagues, subordinates, and others). Common life dimensions include such things as your family (spouse, children, and other family members such as parents, brothers, sisters, etc.), your personal interests (hobbies, leisure time interests, religious and social affiliations, etc.), and your friendship group.

Work-life linkage includes relationships between dimensions of your work and dimensions of your life. Balancing work-life may be difficult when demands from both are extreme. In such a case, you need to prepare yourself to make tradeoffs. You can have a better tradeoff when you can recognise potential tradeoffs much in advance so that you weigh them carefully and arrive at comfortable decision. In weighing tradeoffs to balance your work life and personal life, you need to adopt the following practices:

1. Each tradeoff is suitable for different time perspectives. You may respond a bit more to work than to life demands in the early years of your career.

In midcareer, you may achieve a more comfortable balance. In the later career stage, you may be able to put life dimensions first by even refusing to work overtime or relocation of workplace. This is a normal practice with the people. Try to find out whether this works for you or not.

2. In the light of your long-term goals, see what value you assign to each of the tradeoffs. If you feel that by tilting the balance in favour of work life is better for you, you can opt for that. In the alternative case, put emphasis on your personal life. After all, for getting one thing, you have to sacrify another. But be sure that what you are getting is more valued than what you are sacrifying. If there is any confusion, ask yourself again and again about what is more valuable for you.

If you consider the above practices, you will find that balance between work life and personal life is not fixed for always; it continues to change with the time. When N R Narayanmurthy started his firm for developing computer software at Pune, his wife also joined the firm on full-time basis. Later on, he realised that the firm needed full-time attention of both and thus creating personal life problems, he advised his wife to resign from the firm to concentrate on household activities. She accepted it gladly. After few years, the firm developed as Infosys Technologies, one of the most renowned companies in the software field.

Create Congenial Environment

Often lack of congenial environment at workplace or at home is a strong source of stress. Therefore, you need to create congenial environment at both these places. Congenial environment is one which is sympathetic to you and other members. Congenial environment includes both physical and abstract elements. Physical elements include such things as how the room has been furnished, what the surrounding of the room is, and how comfortable it is to

work or take rest. Abstract elements include how the colleagues or family members are, how they feel about each other, and how they behave. In making your work or home environment congenial, you may do the following:

1. While furnishing and decorating a room, take care that there are some sceneries on walls which give a feeling of being near to the nature. Natural environment generates psychic energy which is useful to fight against stress.
2. The room should not look overcrowded not only in terms of number of persons but also in terms of physical objects. Overcrowded room tends to generate irritation.
3. At the workplace, try to make some colleagues your friends. These colleagues must be trusted and have personality characteristics that match with yours so that you can discuss your job-related problems frankly and openly. Mere discussion of a problem releases tension provided the listener is good.
4. Try to ensure that no one disturbs you while you are working on a critical problem. Make sure that someone takes care of visitors during this period. If possible, you can fix definite time for meeting visitors.
5. At your home, take care of everyone. It is better that you find some time to interact with all family members collectively. This enables them to feel near to you.
6. If some family members have opposite views, try to reconcile these in the light of family's overall goals. Never try to impose your ego on them. This will be retaliated mentally if not physically.
7. Have some hobbies for you and encourage your family members to have commensurate hobbies. Try to pursue your hobbies and facilitate others to pursue their own hobbies. Pursuing hobbies is a good way of overcoming stress problems.

Depending on your age, sex, personality characteristics, personal preferences, time availability, etc., you can choose any hobby like gardening (most popular throughout the world), listening music, reading inspirational books or other literature, indoor games, etc. Whatever hobby you pursue, pursue it sincerely so that your attention is diverted from stressful situation.

Practise Meditation

Meditation is one of the most powerful exercises to reduce stress. During mythological and ancient India, people, particularly saints, etc., used to practise transcendental meditation involving several hours in a single sitting to increase their mental power. In present-day world, simple meditation is practised that may involve even ten minutes. Meditation is a process of deep thinking and is used as a relaxation exercise. It involves quiet, concentrated inner thought to rest the body physically and emotionally. You can practise meditation by adhering to the following steps:

1. Sit in a comfortable position in a relatively quiet location so that no one can disturb you during meditation process.
2. Close your eyes and deepen you breaths.
3. Utter mentally a peaceful word, phrase, or focus on a pleasant mental image. The word, phrase, or mental image should not be related to your work.
4. Concentrate your thoughts on the word, phrase, or mental image. In the beginning, your thoughts may distract but with continuous meditation, this problem will be over.
5. Practise this exercise at least for ten minutes everyday. It is better that you fix a definite time table for this purpose.

Meditation is a very simple exercise and can be practised by anyone. It is effective to overcome stress

provided you attain the level at which your mind remains fully concentrated during meditation. Realising the role of meditation in reducing stress, many organisations have established special lounges for employee use. Employees who practise meditation have reported that it has increased their capacity to deal with stress.

Do Physical Exercise

While meditation makes you strong first by making you strong mentally followed by physical strength, physical exercise makes you strong first by making you strong physically followed by mental strength. Physical exercise may be in several forms like morning/evening walk, jogging, swimming, playing, etc. Those who can afford more time may use *aasan* as provided in Yoga. Whatever the type of exercise you do, do it regularly. If it is not done regularly, it creates adverse impact on the body. Physical exercise keeps you physically fit and, thereby, it enhances your self-esteem which helps you to cope with stress effectively. Many research studies have also revealed that people who exercise regularly feel less tension and stress, are more self-confident, and show greater optimism. People who do not exercise regularly feel more tension and stress, are more likely to be depressed, and experience other negative consequences.

Take the Help of Counselling

Taking the help of counselling is the last resort for overcoming stress problem. Counselling is discussion with the person under stress of a problem that usually has emotional contents in order to help the person cope with it better. Counselling seeks to improve a person's mental health. People with good mental health:

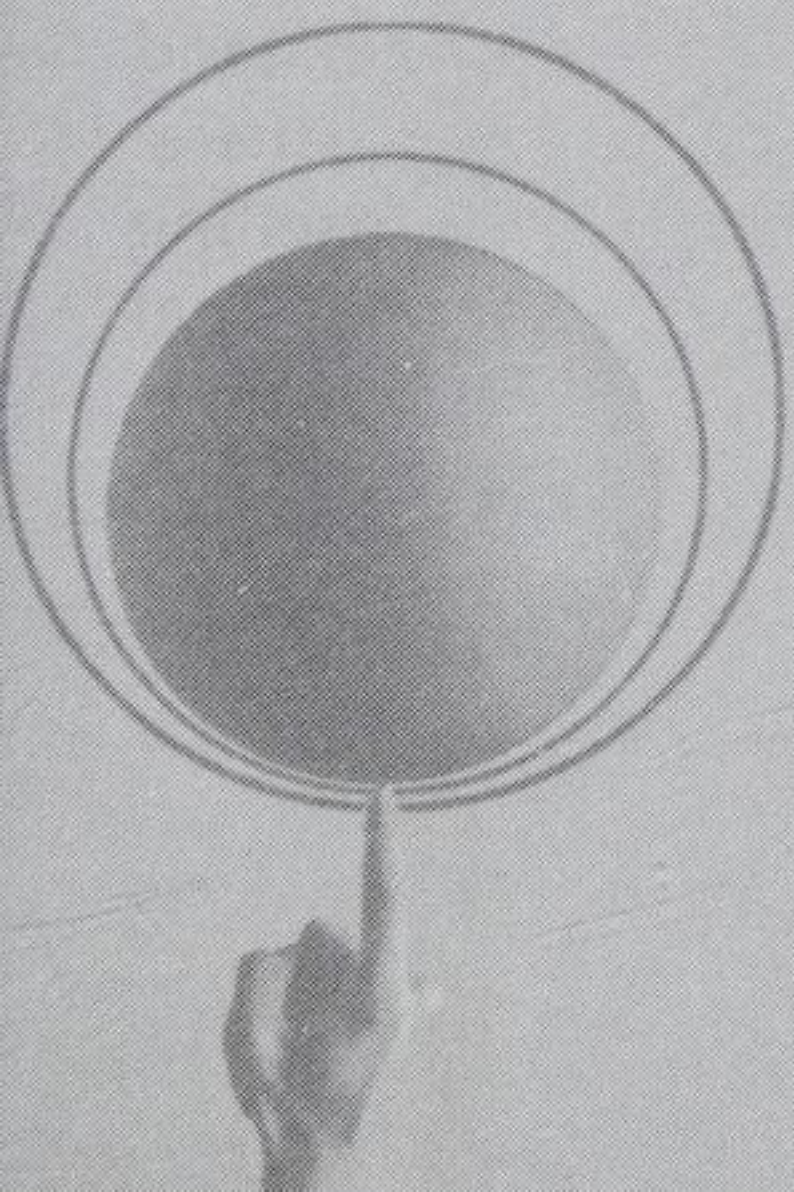
1. feel comfortable about themselves,
2. feel right about other people, and
3. are able to meet the demands of work and personal life.

Counselling can be provided by both professionals and non-professionals. Even elder members of your family can provide you counselling. Your close friend can provide you counselling. However, when emotional problem is quite acute because of persistent stress, it is better to take the help of professionals. Because of increasing trend of stress problems, such professionals are not confined to large cities only but are available in smaller cities too. Counselling performs the following functions in order to reduce stress problems:

1. *Advice:* telling a person what he should do to overcome stress problems.
2. *Reassurance:* giving the person courage and confidence to face a problem.
3. *Tension release:* helping the person feel more free of tension.
4. *Clarified thinking:* encouraging more coherent and rational thought.
5. *Reorientation:* encouraging an internal change in goals and values.

Duration of a counselling session may last for half-an-hour or may extend more than that. Similarly, the frequency of counselling session may be only one or two or may extend to many. It depends on the severity of emotional problems caused by stress. In severe cases, duration of counselling session is extended to understand the nature of emotional problem and its inherent causes. Similarly, in such cases, more number of counselling sessions are required to identify the progress that emotionally sick person has made over the period of time.

YOUR ACTION PLAN



1. Measure your stress level. If any stress induces you to put your maximum, it is positive for you. If any stress induces you to develop any type of psychological, behavioural, or physical problem, it is negative for you. You have to get rid of this negative phenomenon.
2. Identify and define the positive features of those stressors which create problems for you. Adopt practice of emphasising these positive features of stressors over their negative features. In this process, you may observe that some of the stressors are really not as powerful as perceived earlier.
3. Chalk out the action plan to overcome the negative consequences of really strong stressors. Frame a realistic time table to put your action plan into practice. Whatever the practice you adopt, follow it regularly.

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A committed academician and a prolific writer, Dr. Prasad has written many books on management. Besides, he has many research publications to his credit. He has also developed many cases, business games, and role-playing exercises in management. His present book *'Become A High Achiever'* is a testimony of his vast experience and research.

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you will develop confidence for doing
BETTER THAN OTHERS.

This book offers the winning advice on how to :

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- Turn your dreams into reality
- Develop a stronger inner confidence
- Convert impossible into possible
- Choose a life of abundance
- Take rewarding risks along the way
- Develop a healthy ego

Entrepreneurs, doctors, writers, managers... people in every walk of life are achieving the best in life by overcoming all hurdles to their success through the magnetic power of their dynamic personality. They are leading a life of abundance by turning their dreams into reality. You can also be one of these people.

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